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Daily Report

LAST ISSUE

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LAST ISSUE

Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-167
Tuesday
27 August 1996

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Daily Report
Central Eurasia

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CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 27 Aug

LD2708072496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0447 GMT 27 Aug 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — Today's press concentrates on events in Chechnya. The ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA newspaper runs notes of an eyewitness of Groznyy's assault by rebels with the afterword of its special correspondent Andrey Sharov.

Sufficient time has passed since the start of active combat operations in Groznyy, he notes, but "we have not heard any intelligible explanation from officials on reasons for a virtual surrender of well-protected city to gunmen".

"Alas, a loud promise by Aleksandr Lebed 'to call everybody by name', made in Khankala (Eds: Khankala is a suburb of Groznyy where the headquarters of Russian federal forces is deployed), turned, in real fact, into a scandalous wrangle with Minister Kulikov," the journalist notes.

The ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI newspaper writes that moves taken by secretary of the Russian Security Council on a peaceful settlement of the Chechen conflict convincingly proved that to declare peace does not mean to establish it. Of special importance is the question on the status of Chechnya whether it will be an independent state or not.

"Will Chechens want to wait for another five years? The more so, since the federal centre says, on the one hand, that the Russian government subordinates to the will of people and unequivocally rules, on the other, that this will must not overstep the framework of Russia's unity and indivisibility," the daily writes.

IZVESTIYA special correspondent Stepan Kiselev visited Chechnya together with Security Council secretary Lebed on Saturday and Sunday. The journalist puts forth a hypothesis that "Chechnya can be proclaimed an independent state under Russia's protectorate".

IZVESTIYA analyst Valeriy Vyzhutovich writes about difficulties of the Security Council secretary's mission.

The KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper carries a report by its special correspondent Aleksandr Khokhlov on a peaceful mission of the Security Council secretary under the headline "Aleksandr Lebed between Chechen hammer and Moscow anvil".

In the journalist's opinion "Lebed needs peace at any price to remain in politics and power".

The trade union newspaper TRUD comments on a report by the Russian State Statistics Committee for the third week of August, according to which the general index of consumer prices in the country declined by 0.1 percent for the first time during the years of reforms.

In the daily's opinion, the seasonal factor worked: vegetables and fruit became cheaper. Demand for goods and services drops: dozens of millions of Russians have no money, TRUD stresses.

IZVESTIYA starts a new heading, "Choice of Provinces", which will cover results of elections of regional leaders. The first article examines style and views of some Russian governors and their relations with the capital.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI publishes an article devoted to the fifth anniversary of Moldavia's independence.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA cites particulars about the sacking of chairman of the Social Insurance Fund Yuriy Shatyrenko.

The same newspaper prints the Russian president's decrees in the section of official documents: on measures to protect rights of shareholders and ensure interests of the state as owner and shareholder, on the Office of the Russian President, on acts of the government concerning coordinating and consultative bodies, which became invalid.

Nearly all newspapers feature materials devoted to the 100th birth of outstanding Russian actress Faina Ranevskaya.

CIS: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan Support Tajik, Afghan Arms Embargo

LD2608163196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1612 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK, Aug 26 (Interfax) — Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have supported an Uzbek initiative to put an embargo on arms supplies to Tajikistan and Afghanistan on the agenda of the U.N. General Assembly session opening in September.

The decision was taken at a session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, held in Bishkek Monday, Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Roza Otunbayeva told a news conference after the session.

She said that in addition to the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border, the ministers also discussed issues relating to the Central Asian peacekeeping battalion, primarily its material and technical maintenance. It was also decided to hold a regional seminar on peacekeeping.

The battalion is currently in the United States participating in an exercise held as part of the NATO Partnership For Peace program, Otunbayeva said. Next similar exercises will be held in Central Asia, she said.

The session also discussed preparations for a Turkic summit, to be held in Tashkent.

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Russia: Russia, U.S. To Discuss European Security, Chechnya

LD2708075996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0634 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By Ivan Lebedev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Washington, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — U.S. Deputy State Secretary Strobe Talbott and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov will concentrate on bilateral relations and European security at their meeting which will be held in Ottawa on Tuesday, reported U.S. State Secretary spokesman Glyn Davies here on Monday.

He noted that Talbott flew to the Canadian capital to hold another round of regular consultations with his Russian counterpart. He stressed that they are held this time as a follow-up of the recent discussions between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov.

The deputy foreign ministers are expected to discuss NATO expansion, Russia's position on this problem and the development of the dialogue between Moscow and the North Atlantic alliance.

Besides, Davies reported that they will examine numerous international issues which will be on the agenda of the international community this autumn, including the signing of the treaty on the universal prohibition of nuclear tests, the election of the U.N. secretary-general and the peace process in the Middle East.

The spokesman said that the situation in Chechnya will be examined at the Talbott-Mamedov consultations. The problem of Chechnya is discussed at all Russian-American meetings. Davies expressed his opinion that it will be also examined on Tuesday.

The State Department spokesman positively described actions by the Russian president's national security assistant and secretary of the Security Council Aleksandr Lebed in a Chechen settlement.

It is very important for the United States that his efforts near Groznyy resulted in stopping the main combat operations, the spokesman said. The ceasefire agreement is observed on the whole, and this is good news, he added.

The situation in Chechnya has noticeably improved, at least, from the very important humanitarian point of view, the spokesman claimed.

Davies expressed hope for the earliest achievement of an agreement which will put an end to the conflict once and for all.

Russia: Guard Wounded in Attack on Russian Consulate in Bahrain

LD2708061896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0548 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By Vyacheslav Annikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Abu Dhabi, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — Unknown persons attacked a policemen on guard at the Russian consulate in Manamah, Bahrain, overnight to Monday, Russia's Charge d'Affaires in the United Arab Emirates Sergey Peskov told Itar-Tass by telephone on Tuesday.

The attackers opened fire at the policeman on guard and seriously wounded him. Several Russian citizens, working at the Russian Embassy, live in the consulate. None of them was hurt in the pre-dawn incident, the Russian diplomat said.

Peskov said the assailants made no attempts to penetrate the territory of the Russian Embassy and immediately left in a car already waiting for them.

The police and the security services of Bahrain have launched an investigation. They are trying to identify the attackers and find out what their motives were.

This was the first time a foreign mission in Bahrain has come under attack since anti-government unrest erupted there.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Receives Ukrainian Premier for Talks

LD2708083896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0617 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Aug 27 (Interfax) — The prime ministers of Russia and Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin and Pavel Lazarenko met in Moscow Tuesday morning, an official source in the Russian government told Interfax.

After a one on one meeting the heads of governments were to be joined by their closest aides.

The talks are expected to be followed by the ceremony of signing intergovernmental agreements, in particular on cooperation in space exploration for peaceful purposes, on scientific and technological cooperation and on plant quarantine.

Russia's coming introduction of a value-added tax on imports from Ukraine on September 1 may be discussed by the sides.

On Tuesday Lazarenko is also scheduled to meet Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev and return to Kiev in the evening.

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Russia: Military in Tajikistan Signs Accord With Afghan Authorities

LD2608140396 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 26 Aug 96

[Video report from the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Diplomats and the command of the Russian border guards in Tajikistan, and the commanders of the Defense Ministry of the Islamic State of Afghanistan have held a meeting in Pamir region.

The meeting was held at one of the dangerous sections of the Tajik-Afghan border — in Shughnan District — and at the time most inconvenient for diplomatic activities, too. According to military sources, a 200-strong group of Tajik opposition rebels is gathering on the adjacent bank of the River Pyandzh to force their way through the border to fight in Tajikistan. Is it possible to avert the impending conflict? Mecheslav Senkevich, Russian ambassador to Tajikistan; Pavel Tarasenko, commander of the group of Russian border guards; Said Ibrahim Hakimi, temporary charge d'affairs for Afghanistan, are trying to sort out the problems with the representatives of the Badakhshan authorities and the Afghan Defense Ministry at this camp-like site.

One cannot say that there was a total mutual understanding between the Russians and the Afghans. The talks were progressing with some difficulties, but then Russian Ambassador Senkevich made a decision to continue them at the opposite side of the border river Pyandzh. The Afghan side gave no guarantees of safety on their territory. However, both the diplomats and the military made the decision to go to the adjacent territory.

We are now in Shughnan district of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The negotiating parties continued their meeting here, and finally there was a long-awaited breakthrough: the border guards signed a protocol which sets up a 25 km buffer zone along the border, where the Tajik opposition rebels and all those who want to force their way across the Tajik border on Tajik territory will not be allowed. The Afghans want to live in peace too, and they do not need to fight with Russian border guards, Afghan commander Abdal Abal said. Therefore, they will not let in their villages those who want war.

It would be naive to believe that there will be a holding peace after the meeting at the Tajik-Afghan border. However, yet another new way to avert impending crises has been found: talks with authorities and the military in Afghan regions.

Russia: Tajikistan To Join Customs Union Despite Uzbek Objections

MM2708114896 Moscow PRAVDA PYAT in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 2

[Report by Igor Lenskiy: "Tajikistan Will Be Admitted To Customs Union"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of talks between Russian Vice Premier Valeriy Serov and Tajik Premier Yahyo Azimov an agreement in principle has been reached on Tajikistan's admission to the Customs Union which currently brings together Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kirghizia. Membership of the Customs Union will be officially registered in fall of this year, Ramazan Mirzoyev [name as transliterated], Tajik ambassador to Russia, told PRAVDA-5. In a conversation with your correspondent, Zafar Saidov [name as transliterated], press secretary to the president of Tajikistan, noted that the republic had expressed a desire to join the "treaty of the four" back in the spring. But at that time there were three obstacles: the difficult internal political situation in Tajikistan, the fact that inter-Tajik discord had not been settled, and the position of Uzbekistan, whose opinion the Tajik leadership was forced to take into account given the country's geographic position. It is widely known that Uzbekistan is distancing itself from any deep integration within the CIS framework, and for a large part of the year Tajikistan's only link to the outside world is via Uzbek territory. It was only a few days ago that the Uzbek authorities authorized the passage of freight and official transport from the neighboring republic along its roads, but Uzbekistan is still closed to Tajik citizens' private cars.

Russia: 'Georgian Government in Exile' Meets at Moscow Location

LD2508203396 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 25 Aug 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Lately, the Russian capital has become one of the most attractive places of refuge for political immigrants from the former Soviet republics. Numerous exiles from Central Asia and the Caucasian states are hiding here. Moreover, none of them has so far officially applied for political asylum. Aleksey Kondulukov continues the subject.

[Kondulukov] They meet in Moscow approximately once every two months. They meet in secret, in full accordance with conspiracy rules. They call themselves "the Georgian government in exile."

[Begin unidentified man recording, speaking with a Georgian accent] The republic's Supreme Council and the government, currently in exile, are continuing the

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political struggle. The Supreme Council Presidium holds regular meetings at which decisions are taken to restore legal power in Georgia by peaceful means. [end recording]

[Kondulukov over archive pictures of former Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia] Following an armed struggle in 1992, the power of the so-called state council of the republic was established in Georgia. The leadership of Zviad Gamsakhurdia was forced to emigrate, mainly to Chechnya. The Zviadists organized an uprising in western Georgia in the fall of 1993. In their opinion, it was suppressed, not without military help from Russia, which responded to Eduard Shevardnadze's plea for help and his agreement to join the CIS. Gamsakhurdia's mysterious death solved the problems of many people but not of those who had been among his supporters. According to the Zviadists, since then about a million people have left Georgia. Mostly this was an economic emigration but not entirely.

[Begin Guram Absadze recording, former deputy prime minister in Gamsakhurdia's government — identified by caption] They overthrew us. They overthrew peace. There has been no precedent in the world practice when the president, the Supreme Council, the government, and the local authorities were all in exile. Have you seen this anywhere? The president or the government chairman may be overthrown or go into exile. But for all the power branches to go into exile — there is no such thing. [end recording]

[Kondulukov] Since the final political and military defeat, many emigrants among the Gamsakhurdia supporters have never gone back home. They are afraid of repressions. They are afraid of repressions on Russian territory too.

[Begin Absadze recording] Any policeman can stop and arrest us. Sometimes we have to hide. [end recording]

[Kondulukov] The activity of political exiles can hardly be called "very active": Economic support for families of the Zviadists imprisoned in Georgia, spreading information about them among international human rights organizations, and financing several of their newspapers.

The Supreme Council in exile is conducting a legal war against the Shevardnadze government, mainly by adopting resolutions on paper. The latest is on the elections in Georgia, which the Zviadists regard as null and void. As for the rest, it boils down to waiting for a time when the political climate in Georgia warms up and they can join the legal struggle.

[Begin Tengiz Chachava recording, former Georgia ambassador to Russia — identified by caption] Over the past 18 months or two years, after the murder, after the death of our president, there has been certainly less interest toward us. [end recording]

[Kondulukov] There is a sort of Zviadists' diaspora in the Baltic countries at present. It is particularly numerous in Finland, the only country that managed to give them official political asylum, unlike Moscow, which seems to be turning into a Mecca for political exiles from the former USSR republics, both Central Asia and the Caucasian states. [video show "Georgian government in exile" sitting around a table in a garden at a secret location]

Russia: Foreign Ministry Links Latvian Vote to Eviction of Russians

LD2608155796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1538 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Aug 26 (Interfax) — The Russian Foreign Ministry believes that the aim of the Latvian parliament's August 22 "Declaration on Occupation" of Latvia is to "create a 'legal' basis for pushing out of the country our compatriots who are already deprived of the opportunity to acquire Latvian citizenship."

Latvia would like to officially declare Russians as "occupants", the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement received by Interfax on Monday.

This is an "unprecedenteuly cynical move: those in the Red Army who gave away their lives for the freedom of the republic, the liberation of Europe and the world from the brown plague are put on the same level with Nazis," the statement reads.

Furthermore, the Latvian parliament has put forward "territorial claims to Russia, claiming neither more nor less than 2,000 square meters of originally Russian land," the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

The Latvian parliament's "openly anti-Russian action involving deputies from all parties in the government coalition and the executive branch's public silence bring once again into doubt the sincerity of Riga's statements on its desire to normalize and develop Russian-Latvian relations," the statement says.

The Russian Foreign Ministry confirmed that Russia's "assessment of the events in 1940" remained unchanged, saying that there was no need to reiterate it.

The Russian side decisively rejects territorial claims and condemns the Latvian authorities' discriminatory policy and practice, the statement reads.

"The present provocation by Riga plays into the hands of those who would like to impede the enhancement of good relations between Russia and Latvia," the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Begins 'Regular Vacation' in Countryside

LD2608155696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1545 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Aug 26 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin began his regular vacation Monday, presidential spokesman Sergey Yastrzhembskiy told Interfax.

He said Yeltsin is spending the vacation at his countryside residence Rus, about 90 kilometers northeast of Moscow.

Yastrzhembskiy did not rule out that Yeltsin may spend part of his vacation at other locations. "The head of state has only begun his vacation," he said.

During the vacation Yeltsin continues working on documents, monitors domestic and foreign policy issues and daily receives a large package of documents from Moscow which require his involvement, he said.

"Many of the documents return to the presidential administration on the same day," Yastrzhembskiy said.

He said that Naina Yeltsin, the president's spouse, is in a satisfactory condition after Saturday's operation on a kidney.

She talked with Yeltsin over the telephone from hospital several times and maintains telephone communication with family members, said Yastrzhembskiy.

He did not rule out that during the vacation Yeltsin may meet with various officials.

However, Yastrzhembskiy said it is necessary to allow the president to have rest and restore his health after the elections.

Russia: Aide Gives Possible 'Variants' in Yeltsin's Vacation Plans

LD2708085296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0827 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By Artyom Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who has been vacationing in the Zavidovo natural reserve located 100 kilometers north-west of Moscow since August 26, "is not planning to hold any working meetings there", a spokesman for the presidential press service told Itar-Tass on Tuesday.

This does not rule out the possibility of working meetings outside Zavidovo, if the president chooses to continue his vacation elsewhere.

Yeltsin's press secretary Sergey Yastrzhembsky told a briefing in the Kremlin on Monday that Yeltsin "continues to work with documents and examine operational and pressing problems of both domestic political and international character."

The press secretary did not rule out the possibility that "in the course of his vacation, Boris Yeltsin will hold working meetings."

Russia: Sources Give Conflicting Reports on Yeltsin-Lebed Meeting

LD2608152996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1523 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Aug 26 (Interfax) — Sources diverged Monday about whether Russian Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed will be meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin in the next few days, and under what conditions.

According to the presidential press service, no meeting between Lebed is currently on Yeltsin's working schedule. Yeltsin left for vacation Monday, presidential spokesman Sergey Yastrzhembsky told Interfax.

A Security Council press secretary told Interfax a meeting may be held on Tuesday, August 27.

Other well-informed sources told Interfax that such a meeting could be held, but added that the meeting could be productive only after Yeltsin thoroughly analyzed all documents on the situation in Chechnya, as well as those that Lebed agreed on at his recent talks with the separatists. They said Yeltsin had requested all documents concerning settlement in Chechnya for examination.

The sources did not exclude the possibility of Yeltsin holding consultations with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and other leaders involved in Chechnya settlement before meeting with Lebed.

The postponement of the meeting with Yeltsin does not affect Lebed's working schedule, his press secretary, Aleksandr Barkhatov, told Interfax. Lebed is preparing for another round of talks with Chechen separatists, he said. Lebed ordered a thorough legal analysis of a new draft political agreement that he had discussed with Chechen Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov in the village of Noviyye Atagi last Saturday, August 24, Barkhatov said.

In addition, Lebed requested the chairman of the Dagestani branch of the Honor and Fatherland movement, academician Magomed Chaguchiyev, to hold a conference under the motto Peace and Accord in Caucasus Home by September 15. The conference will be attended by

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the leaders and intelligentsia of the North Caucasus republics. This forum is supposed to provide a political assessment of the situation in the Caucasus and will promote settlement in Chechnya.

Russia: Yeltsin's Meeting With Lebed Postponed Until 27 Aug

LD2608143696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1423 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 26 Aug (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin will not receive Aleksandr Lebed, secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, today. The expected meeting with Boris Yeltsin, now resting near Moscow, has been postponed tentatively to 27 August. ITAR-TASS was told this by the press service of the Russian Federation Security Council.

"But whatever happens," the report continues, quoting press secretary of the Security Council Aleksandr Barkhatov, Aleksandr Lebed's plans to leave for another round of talks with the Chechen opposition remain unchanged."

Russia: Yeltsin Has No Meetings Planned 27 Aug

LD2708073796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0731 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Aug 27 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, on vacation at his countryside residence in Rus, 95 kilometers from Moscow, has no meetings planned for today [27 August], the presidential press service reported.

Earlier, some media reports suggested that Yeltsin might meet with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed.

Russia: Naina Yeltsina Undergoes Operation; Kuznetsov To Head SBP

MK2708094096 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 2

[Report by Natalya Konstantinova under the "President" rubric: "Naina Yeltsina Has Been Operated On. Boris Yeltsin's Chief Aide-de-Camp Has Become Chief of His Security Service"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The presidential press service has confirmed reports that Naina Yeltsina has undergone an operation on her left kidney. According to Professor Sergey Mironov, chief of the presidential medical center, the operation was planned in advance after a checkup Naina Yeltsina had undergone earlier at the Central Clinical Hospital. The post-operation period is proceeding smoothly; as of today the president's wife is in satisfactory condition (the operation was performed on 24 August). A few days later, if everything goes fine, Naina Yeltsina will leave the hospital, after which she will undergo treatment at an outpatient clinic.

Thus reports published in NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on 23 August 1996 regarding two special wards set up at the Central Clinical Hospital within mere days have been fully confirmed. As NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA asserted, one of the wards was meant for the president's wife. The other, according to some sources, was prepared for Viktor Chernomyrdin; others insisted that it was to have accommodated Yeltsin himself.

In another development, your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent has managed to find out that the presidential press service will be in for restructuring in the very near future; in the meantime, changes have occurred at the [Kremlin] security service.

According to Sergey Devyatov, press service chief of the Federal Protection Service [FSO], the process of merging the FSO and the Presidential Security Service [SBP] has begun. Mr. Devyatov said that the presidential edict on the matter is being realized in a normal fashion and that the employees of both special services are not worried at all by the fact that the SBP has become part of the FSO as one of its directorates.

What has come as a genuine sensation is another piece of news: Boris Yeltsin's chief aide-de-camp, Anatoliy Kuznetsov, has been appointed to head the SBP. The face of this man is well known, because all this time he has been in direct proximity to the president, fulfilling all functions of a bodyguard and at the same time seeing to it that the president does not get caught in the rain. Anatoliy Kuznetsov has been journalists' favorite personage because he has always retained his good-humored air and appeared to complement Boris Yeltsin's imposing figure by his equally sturdy body. It should be recalled that three aides-de-camp, Aleksey Berezkin, Oleg Pankov, and Anatoliy Kuznetsov, have constantly worked with the president.

Yesterday it transpired that Boris Yeltsin had been officially on vacation since 26 August and that he would spent his vacation at his "Rus" residence at Zavidovo outside Moscow.

Russia: Yeltsin Bodyguard To Head Presidential Security Service

MK2708093996 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 1

[Report by Tatyana Malkina under the "Vacation" rubric: "Boris Yeltsin Has Been on Vacation for the Second Day Now. It Is Uncertain How Much Time the

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President Will Spend in Zavidovo and Who His Visitors Will Be"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

The president has chosen Viktor Chernomyrdin as a buffer of worthy scale between himself and his overly energetic national security adviser. So, Aleksandr Lebed's meeting with the premier, not Boris Yeltsin, which was held yesterday, can be seen as a specific manifestation of this policy toward the Security Council secretary chosen by the president. Informed sources at the Kremlin have confirmed that before meeting with Mr. Lebed the president will probably prefer to hear the views of everyone wishing to assess the general's achievements, to carefully study all documents on the Chechen talks with their assistance, to hear the premier's final opinion, and only then to pronounce his word.

On the first day of his vacation Boris Yeltsin appointed Anatoliy Kuznetsov, one of his three lieutenants, a man of huge size, who is well familiar to everyone who watches political news on television, as the new chief of the Presidential Security Service [SBP], which is currently part of the Federal Protection Service [FSO]. Mr. Kuznetsov has been Boris Yeltsin's personal bodyguard for a couple of years now; he enjoys considerable authority among his colleagues, which is particularly important because the SBP has begun slowly but surely breaking apart after Aleksandr Korzhakov's departure. Mr. Kuznetsov has always been considered a high-class professional and, in the view of well-informed sources, unlike his former chief Mr. Korzhakov, he will not become a political figure.

Russia: Yeltsin Releases Deputy Head of Presidential Administration

LD2708092696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0859 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 27 Aug. ITAR-TASS — Russian President Boris Yeltsin released Valeryan Viktorov from the post of deputy head of the administration of the president of the Russian Federation in charge of the Russian president's main directorate for state domestic and foreign policy [name of directorate as received] by decree today in connection with his move to a new job. This was reported by the head of state's press service.

Russia: Lebed Criticizes Yeltsin Edict En Route to Chechnya

MM2608203996 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 1

[Report "on Aleksandr Lebed's latest visit to Chechnya" by special correspondent Stepan Kiselev under the general heading "How Will Lebed's Chechen Chess Game End?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] No sooner had they flown in than they sat down. Well, that is to say, literally 10-15 minutes after the helicopters carrying the Security Council secretary's team had landed on the outskirts of the village of Staryye Atagi, Aleksandr Lebed with a businesslike air was opening up a folding chess board and arranging his wooden (white) army against the wooden (black) army of his host, Revzan, former chief of the local cement plant... [passage omitted]

...On the way to Chechnya on board the Tu-134 Vladimir Petrov, leader of the Security Council secretary's aides apparatus, came into the passenger section in order to inform journalists of the latest "Lebed sensation": Just before the flight the security service had learned from mutually independent sources that an attempt on Aleksandr Lebed's life during this visit was being prepared by opponents of the Security Council secretary's peace talks with the separatists. "If Lebed has decided to inform the press of this, that means things are really serious," the Security Council secretary's press secretary commented. "Ivanych [Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed] does not kick up dust unnecessarily."

A few minutes later Lebed himself came into the passenger section, but this time with another "sensation." He very sharply criticized the president's edict of 18 August "On Urgent Measures To Ensure a Policy of Thrift," which envisages halting the funding of several Chechen programs. For example, Point One of the appendix to this edict lists suspending the activity of the Federal Social Support Fund. This means that, by halting the funding of the social articles of the budget (pensions, benefits, and so forth) Russia thereby indirectly recognizes the independence of Chechnya. But at the same time Lebed is required to perform the task of "keeping the rebellious republic within Russia." Obviously, it is hard to describe this presidential edict as anything other than provocative.

Judging by the events of the past week, it is hard to evaluate Boris Yeltsin's behavior with regard to the Chechen war and toward Aleksandr Lebed as anything other than inappropriate. First he inopportunely expressed his dissatisfaction with the Security Council secretary's work on settling the conflict when military operations were stopped in Groznyy; then he suddenly turned out to be far too busy to meet with Lebed in person when the need arose to agree the political aspects of the Russian-Chechen talks. Overall, you get the impression that General Lebed is that "lone soldier in the battlefield" who tries to stop the war.

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....At the talks in the village of Staryye Atagi the Chechens offered Aleksandr Lebed some sort of makeshift variation that the general could not fathom out right away, and so he postponed the talks until Sunday morning. However, overnight analysis of the adjourned game evidently did not satisfy the general either, and he left for Moscow to have the Chechens' proposals examined by legal experts. The character of the Chechens' proposals can be guessed only from Lebed's off-the-cuff pronouncements and the mysterious hints of people in his entourage.

First, since Foreign Ministry experts are to be enlisted to work on a final document, it cannot be ruled out that the Chechens have proposed something that falls outside the framework of intrafederative relations. Second, since Lebed's mandate restricts his actions to the framework of the Constitution, there is no talk of Chechnya's seceding from Russia. Therefore, it is possible to put forward the hypothesis that at the talks the sides most likely found a formula that is new to Russia and which governs the relations between a mother country and a former colony — the formula of a protectorate. That is to say, that Chechnya could be declared an independent state under Russian protection.

This is not the formula of a victory, but nor does it mean capitulation. It is a draw. A word which sounds identical in Chechen and in Russian.

Russia: Lebed's Press Secretary Denounces Zavgayev's Accusations

LD2708114496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1038 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 27 Aug (ITAR-TASS) — All the accusations made by the leader of Chechnya, Doku Zavgayev, at today's news conference and leveled at Aleksandr Lebed are nothing but "blatant untruths." This was how Lebed's press secretary, Aleksandr Barkhatov, commented on Zavgayev's evaluation of the activity of the secretary of the Russian Security Council in Chechnya.

The leader of the Chechen Republic said, in particular, that Lebed, ignorant of the problems of the Caucasus, was exacerbating the situation there and leading to a global war in the region through his separate talks with the rebels. "All this is untrue, because both the Russian president and the country's prime minister are aware of all Lebed's plans," Aleksandr Barkhatov told the ITAR- TASS correspondent. He went on to say that it was known that Boris Yeltsin and Viktor Chernomyrdin approved all Lebed's initiatives prior to the Security Council secretary's latest trip to Chechnya. "Lies always breed mistakes," stressed Aleksandr Barkhatov, "and Zavgayev's chief mistake is that by accusing Lebed, he is also accusing the entire leadership of the country."

Asked what purpose Zavgayev had in making such accusations, Aleksandr Barkhatov voiced the view that it was "pure reflex." He noted: "Having been in position in the republic all this time and having been endowed with all possible powers, Zavgayev has, nevertheless, been unable to do anything to settle the situation in the republic." Lebed's press secretary believes that Zavgayev has often floundered in untruths. "We all remember his statements that he was in control of the situation in the republic and that there were only from 10 to 15 rebels left," noted Aleksandr Barkhatov. "So all the Chechen leader's utterances today are simply a continuation of those untruths."

Russia: Security Council Press Secretary Defends Lebed

LD2708095596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0913 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Aug 27 (Interfax) — Russian Security Council press secretary Aleksandr Barkhatov said Moscow-backed Chechen head Doku Zavgayev's charges against Security Council chief Alexander Lebed are "lies."

At a Tuesday news conference Zavgayev claimed that the Chechen capital Groznyy was surrendered on August 6 on Lebed's instructions, and that the forming of joint commandant's offices is actually a coup d'etat, as a result of which the separatists may come to power in Chechnya.

"Zavgayev has to accuse someone in order to save himself,"

Barkhatov told Interfax on Tuesday. "His own proposals on ways to settle the conflict failed."

"Everything Lebed is doing today to resolve the conflict in Chechnya is most sensible and rational," Barkhatov said.

Reference to the formation of joint commandant's offices, Barkhatov said: "Two sides fought in the war, and therefore the efforts to cease fire must involve both sides."

Russia's president and prime minister both approve of the steps taken by Lebed in Chechnya, and so Zavgayev is "hitting the president and the prime minister when he throws stones at Lebed," Barkhatov said.

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Russia: Chechen 'Volcano' To Continue Smoldering

MM2708085396 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 1

[Article by K. Zharova: "Building Castles in Air on Volcano. How Is 'Peace Being Made' in Chechnya Today?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Who has a greater desire today to stop the war in Chechnya than the officers and men dying there and their wives, mothers, and children? Since the Russian authorities long ago stopped taking the people's interests into account, it would also be naive to think that Lebed's attempts to act as peacemaker were aimed at saving the lives of Russian guys. But you get the impression that Lebed has been set the task of ending the war at all costs. Yes, even at the cost of thousands of pointless casualties, at the cost of Russia's integrity too. Just as long as it is stopped immediately!

Yeltsin tried to do precisely the same thing before the election, by sitting down at the negotiating table with Yandarbiyev. Now that he — the man who unleashed and provoked the slaughter — has turned his back on day-to-day affairs, that he is seemingly indifferent whether this vital part of Russia is wrested away or not, the entire initiative in peacemaking has fallen to the Security Council secretary. The only thing that the president has done to this end is to give him superpowers. For what reason? For whom?

Let us not forget that the presidential election is approaching in the United States. American voters are perfectly well aware of the services their President rendered ours during his election. In November they will be entitled to ask: Who is it, Clinton, that you dragged to power so desperately, contrary to the rules of democracy? In short: "Tell me who your friend is".... What can "friend Bill" tell them? That he backed a tyrant who is killing his own people and who is to blame for the bloodshed? After all, the Americans are profoundly indifferent to the problems of Russia's integrity, what is important to them is to have guarantees that their President is a devotee of freedom and democracy. Thus, the question arises — who is Lebed actually working for?

In order to answer that question we need only look at who he is talking to. Is it not symbolic that he flew to the talks with Maskhadov on Albakov's plane? Do you remember that name? Our newspaper and other publications too have repeatedly said that he is a well-known drugs baron. Transport and other services were then supplied by one Khachalayev, who, the Chechens claim, is a well-known mob godfather. Incidentally, shortly before Lebed's visit to Chechnya Khachalayev, according to Azerbaijani press reports, was in Baku, where the republic's security minister held instructive talks with him. Incidentally, other members of the Azerbaijani Government refused to meet with Khachalayev.

People in Chechnya are now saying that Lebed's meetings with Maskhadov and Yandarbiyev were held in the "castles in the air." That is what people here call the palaces built as a result of the operations with letters of credit.

What results can be expected from meetings with people whose word is no more than empty noise until they can see some advantage in it for them? Thus, you will recall that for a short while before the Russian presidential election the semblance of a lull in the fighting was successfully created. Perhaps it will be again before the U.S. presidential election. Lebed will be able to achieve the same thing. But only temporarily. There is no hope that the war will be finally brought to an end even if Chechnya wins the status of independent state.

The fact is that those who know about the reality of Chechnya are perfectly well aware that the republic's territory is shared among field commanders — as Russia likes to call them — who are actually gang ringleaders. Neither Maskhadov nor Yandarbiyev can give them orders. The coordination of their actions, or any kind of reliability or discipline in these formations is a myth. So when you sit down to negotiate with some of them, you have to win the support of others. But that is impossible — just as impossible, say, as simultaneously reaching agreement with the Solntsevo, Izmaylovo, and other crime gangs in Moscow. Yet we are talking about precisely this kind of formation and the laws espoused by them.

Of course, we could get distressed about the fact that the lofty status of our country's Security Council secretary has been brought down to such a level. But, after all, the president himself had previously talked peace with them — and not in some village, but in the Kremlin!

It remains a mystery why at a decisive moment instead of supporting the legitimate Chechen Government the Kremlin preferred bandits to it every time. As soon as the development of the intra-Chechen dialogue, which was the only thing that could have solved the problem, started getting somewhere, the Kremlin immediately started playing games with the bandits — pushing [Chechen Republic leader] Zavgayev into the background, as is happening now. This looks like a betrayal not only in respect of Zavgayev himself — after all, it is not a question of actual personalities now. The fact is that the Chechen Republic Government

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persistently and consistently insists that Chechnya is part of Russia. That is something that Zavgayev himself has repeatedly stated — and those who dream of destroying Russia will have their revenge on him for it.

Will the war end even if our troops leave? Even if there is a short truce? Sadly, no. The jinni has been let out of the bottle. A whole stratum of people has been formed in Chechnya who can live no other way but in a state of war. And they are well armed. They were first helped out in 1991, when Shaposhnikov and Grachev hurriedly withdrew our Army, leaving mountains of weapons behind. The second time, it seems, the mission has been handed to Lebed — whole detachments are already disarming, and the general calls this a misunderstanding. So this volcano, which is so convenient for presidents both on this and the other side of the Atlantic, will continue to smolder. It is an ace up the sleeve that is costing hundreds of thousands of lives.

Russia: Lack of Information Available on Lebed's Chechnya Proposals

MM2608204696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 1

[Commentary by observer Valeriy Vyzhutovich "on the difficulties of the Security Council secretary's mission" under the general heading "How Will Lebed's Chechen Chess Game End?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed stated 25 August in Khankala that he has no right to assume responsibility for the political part of the peace settlement in Chechnya. There are, he said, "legal and organizational questions that require juridical expert examination and further processing." In Lebed's opinion, these questions need to be agreed with the government, the State Legal Administration, and the Ministries for Nationalities Affairs, and then with the president himself.

Kim Tsagolov, deputy minister for nationalities affairs, told IZVESTIYA that the ministry has not yet received the plan for establishing peace in Chechnya proposed by Lebed, but as soon as it arrives it will be submitted for expert analysis by political scientists, lawyers, and economists.

Nor is the State Legal Administration yet in possession of any documents on this subject; according to its staffers, they are also ready to examine the juridical basis of the planned agreements without delay.

Nor is a meeting between Aleksandr Lebed and Boris Yeltsin scheduled for Monday, according to the president's press service.

Will the peace talks be given a further chance, or will they be wrecked yet again?

The 90-minute conversation between Aleksandr Lebed and Viktor Chernomyrdin held on Monday might clarify the situation. But, informing journalists on its content, the premier's press secretary Viktor Konnov revealed nothing definite. Again the same story: Lebed's proposals "require serious study".... How will the situation develop? At the time this issue was signed to press this remained unclear.

Russia: Yeltsin Edict Orders Budget Savings

MM2708093496 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 4

[Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 1208, signed by President Yeltsin in Moscow on 18 August 1996: "On Urgent Measures To Ensure Economies in the Process of Implementing the Federal Budget in the Second Half of 1996," accompanied by a "List of Normative Acts Proposed for Repeal (Suspension)" and a "List of Normative Acts To Be Suspended"]

[FBIS Translated Text] With the view of ensuring the funding in the second half of 1996 of the most socially important programs, the fulfillment of the Russian Federation's international financial obligations, and the resolution of the priority problems of economic restructuring in the context of tough budget restrictions, I decree that:

1. All decisions leading to an increase in federal budget expenditure (fall in revenue) reached after the ratification of the federal law "On the Federal Budget for 1996" shall be suspended as of 1 September 1996 in accordance with Appendix No. 1.

At the same time, the funding of expenditure envisaged in the following normative acts will continue under the established procedure:

1.1. Russian Federation Presidential Edicts:

No. 92 "On Compensation Payments to Pensioners as of 1 February 1996" of 25 January 1996;

No. 210 "On the Extension of the Presidential 'Children of Russia' Program" of 19 February 1996;

No. 345 "On Certain Measures To Boost Investment Activity in the 'Nakhodka' Free Economic Zone" of 9 March 1996;

No. 493 "On Measures To Ensure the Timely Payment of Pensions" of 8 April 1996.

1.2. Russian Federation Government Decrees:

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No. 1244 "On the Stabilization and Development of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic Economy and the Creation of Free Economic Zones On Its Territory" of 18 December 1995;

No. 26 "On Additional Measures To Provide Housing for Servicemen, Citizens Discharged or Retired From Military Service, Internal Affairs Organ Staffers, and Their Family Members, and on the Housing Construction Program for 1996-1997 for These Categories of Citizens" of 13 January 1996;

No. 36 "On the Extension of the Functioning of the 'Ingushetia' Economic Most-Favored Status Zone" of 16 January 1996;

No. 506 "On the Procedure for Financing Expenditure Linked To Implementation of the Russian Federation Law 'On Social Protection for Citizens Exposed to Radiation As A Result of the Chernobyl AES [nuclear electric power station] Disaster'" of 24 April 1996;

No. 647 "On Measures of State Support for Persons Suffering From Sugar Diabetes" of 1 June 1996.

2. The Russian Federation Government shall:

submit to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma under the established procedure a legislative initiative on the suspension in the second half of 1996 of federal laws in accordance with Appendix No. 2;

in drawing up the federal budget for 1997 clarify the list of acts of legislation and other legal acts to be funded out of the federal budget, including the acts suspended by this edict;

submit priority measures to strengthen the revenue side of the budget for ratification by the Russian Federation president and the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma.

3. The Russian Federation Government shall draw up within two weeks a draft Russian Federation presidential edict on additional measures to reduce tax concessions and federal budget expenditure.

4. Russian Federation component executive organ leaders shall implement measures to strengthen the revenue base of budgets and to economize on expenditure until the end of 1996.

[Signed] B. Yeltsin, Russian Federation president

[Dated] Moscow, the Kremlin, 18 August 1996

No. 1208

List of Normative Acts Proposed for Repeal (Suspension)

1. Normative Acts To Be Suspended

1.1. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 2178 "On the Activity of Republic (Federal) and Territorial Funds for the Social Support of the Population" (Paragraph 1) of 14 December 1994.

1.2. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 586 "On Ensuring the Activity of the Presidential Programs Fund" of 13 June 1995.

1.3. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 797 "On the Russian Federation President's Administration of Affairs" of 2 August 1995.

1.4. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 1004 "On Measures To Develop Enterprises in the Chechen Republic Oil Complex" (Paragraph 1) of 4 October 1995.

1.5. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 1032 (Appendix No. 4 to the Federal Targeted Program of State Support for State Nature Reserves and National Parks for the Period Through the Year 2000) of 10 October 1995.

1.6. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 15 "On State Support for the Russian Culture Fund" of 6 January 1996.

1.7. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 86 "On Measures To Restore the Chechen Republic Economy and Social Sphere in 1996" of 24 January 1996.

1.8. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 105 "On the 'Mobile Complex' Presidential Program" (Paragraph 2, Subparagraph 3) of 27 January 1996.

1.9. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 191 "On Changes to Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 495 'On the Socioeconomic Development of Kaliningrad Oblast' of 18 May 1995" of 13 February 1996.

1.10. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 346 "On the State Program for Ensuring the Protection of State Secrets in the Russian Federation in 1996-1997" of 9 March 1996.

1.11. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 401 "On Additional Measures To Ensure the Activity of the Courts in the Russian Federation" of 20 March 1996.

1.12. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 430 "On State Support for Citizens in Building and Acquiring Housing" of 29 March 1996.

1.13. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 439 "On State Support for Defense-Sector Enterprises Located in the Republic of Tatarstan and Implementing Major Civil Output Assimilation Projects" of 1 April 1996.

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1.14. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 450 "On State Support for the Creation by the 'Yelabuzhskiy Avtomobilnyy Zavod' of Car Production Capacity" (Paragraph 4, Subparagraph 1) of 1 April 1996.

1.15. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 491 "On Priority Measures of State Support for Small Business in the Russian Federation" of 4 April 1996.

1.16. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 510 "On the Granting of an Investment Tax Credit to Sverdlovsk Oblast Defense-Sector Enterprises" of 9 April 1996.

1.17. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 606 "On Measures To Develop the Belgorod Oblast Mining and Metallurgical Complex in 1996-2000" (Paragraph 2, Subparagraph 5) of 29 April 1996.

1.18. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 641 "On State Support for the Creation of Modern Car Assembly Production in Kaliningrad Oblast" of 2 May 1996.

1.19. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 692 "On the Granting of an Investment Tax Credit to Udmurt Republic Defense-Sector Enterprises" of 12 May 1996.

1.20. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 826 "On State Support for the Organization of Diesel Engine Manufacture in Yaroslavl Oblast" of 7 June 1996.

1.21. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 833 "On Measures To Enhance the Social Status of Education and Health Workers" (Paragraph 1) of 7 June 1996.

1.22. Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 979 "On State Support for the 'Moskvich' Joint-Stock Company" of 22 June 1996.

1.23. Russian Federation Presidential Directive No. 102 of 4 March 1996 on increasing the number of Prosecutor's Office organ workers by 1,500.

1.24. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 776 "On Measures To Stabilize the Socioeconomic Situation in the Republic of Buryatia" (Paragraph 12) of 11 October 1992.

1.25. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 524 "On Measures of State Support for the 'Avtomobilnyy Zavod imeni Leninskogo Komsomola' State Enterprise" (Paragraph 2) of 25 May 1994.

1.26. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1161 "On the Procedure for and Terms of the Payment of Percentage Supplements to the Official Remuneration (Pay Scale) of Officials and Citizens With Access to State Secrets" (Paragraph 5) of 14 October 1994.

1.27. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 11 "On Improving Information Provision to the Russian Federation Population" of 12 January 1996.

1.28. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 89 "On Urgent Measures To Develop the Chechen Republic Oil and Gas Complex in 1996" of 2 February 1996.

1.29. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 135 "On Measures To Stabilize the Economic Position of the Russian Federation Agro-Industrial Complex in 1996" of 7 February 1996.

1.30. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 188 "On the Granting of an Investment Tax Credit to Organizations Located in Novorossiysk" of 28 February 1996.

1.31. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 498 "On Urgent Measures To Create the Economic Conditions To Stabilize the Work of the Russian Federation Textile and Light Industries in 1996-1997" (Paragraph 6) of 23 April 1996.

1.32. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 425 "On a Member of the Rosstrakhnadzor [Russian Federal Service for Supervision of Insurance Operations] Collegium" of 31 March 1995.

1.33. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 393 of 16 March 1996 on the allocation of funds to the "Moskovskiy tsirk na Tsvetnom bulvare" [Moscow Circus on Tsvetnoy Boulevard] Limited Partnership.

1.34. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 543 of 3 April 1996 on the allocation to the "Orskiy mekhanicheskiy zavod" Joint-Stock Company of funds to pay the customs import duty for equipment supplied.

1.35. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 644 of 22 April 1996 on the allocation to the Russian Federation Presidential Staff of funds to finance expenditure related to the publication of a number of books.

1.36. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 675 of 23 April 1996 on the "Moskovskiy shinnyy zavod" Joint-Stock Company (Paragraphs 1 and 3).

1.37. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 858 of 30 May 1996 on the granting with a view to meeting trade liabilities of tax exemptions within the limits of the expenditure envisaged under Article 17 of the federal budget for 1996 for the development of subway construction.

1.38. Protocol No. AB-P25-28pr of 9 April 1996 of the government session on the coordination of work relating to the provision of facilities to and development of Kaliningrad Oblast (Paragraph 5).

2. Normative Acts To Be Repealed

2.1. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 185 "On Measures of State Support for the Komi SSR Econ-

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omy and Social Sphere" of 21 March 1992. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 2120 of 18 November 1992.

2.2. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 905 "On Measures To Resolve the Urgent Problems of Stabilizing the Economy, Developing the Social Sphere, and Protecting the Environment in Samara Oblast" (Paragraphs 8-10) of 9 September 1993.

2.3. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 330s (Paragraph 3) of 15 April 1994.

2.4. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1062 "On Measures To Fulfill the Russian Federation Government Decree on State Support for the Socioeconomic Development of the Republic of Dagestan, Including Its Mountain Regions, in 1996-2000" (Paragraph 3) of 2 November 1995.

2.5. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 18 "On the Preparations For and Staging of Festive Measures To Mark the 300th Anniversary of the Founding of the Demidov Metallurgical Plant and the 250th Anniversary of the Russian Samovar" (Paragraph 4) of 12 January 1996.

2.6. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 89 "On Urgent Measures To Develop the Chechen Republic Oil and Gas Complex in 1996" (Paragraph 6) of 2 February 1996.

2.7. Russian Federation Government Decree No. 263 "On the 'Fuel and Energy' Federal Targeted Program for 1996-2000" (Paragraph 5, Subparagraphs 2 and 3) of 6 March 1996.

2.8. Russian Federation Government Directive No. 302 of 28 February 1996 on the provision of financial support to river transport enterprises during the preparations for the 1996 sailing season.

2.9. Protocol No. OS-P11-74pr "On the Socioeconomic Position of Sakhalin Oblast" (Part 2, Paragraph 13 relating to the conclusion of a credit agreement for 1996) of 9 December 1995 from the conference chaired by O.N. Soskovets, first deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Government.

List of Normative Acts To Be Suspended

Federal Laws

1. The Russian Federation Law "On State Secrets" (Article 21, Subparagraphs 11 and 12).

2. The federal law "On State Protection for Judges and Law-Enforcement and Control Organ Officials" (Articles 6, 7, 11, 20, and 22 [Subparagraphs 1 and 2] to be suspended by 1 January 1997).

3. The federal law "On Amendments and Additions to the Russian Federation Law 'On the Russian Federation Prosecutor's Office'."

4. The federal law "On Additional Guarantees of Social Protection for Judges and Apparatus Workers at Russian Federation Courts" (Articles 4, 5, and 6 to be suspended by 1 January 1997).

Media Issues

Russia: Special Edition of PRAVDA Noted, Mailbag Described

MM2708090896

[FBIS Report] Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 24 August 1996 publishes over part of three columns in the middle of the left-hand side of page 3 a "special edition of the newspaper" PRAVDA comprising a 650-word unattributed, untitled article beneath the PRAVDA masthead, which is dated Friday 23 August and bears the No. 107 (27753). The article reads as follows [all ellipses as published]:

"An ordinary event — the publication of a regular issue of the country's best-known newspaper — today appears a sensation. Hurrah for 'democracy'! Nevertheless, PRAVDA has gotten to its readers once again. For the time being as a special edition of the newspaper. We will hope for a daily one. In his 'Letter to Comrades' Aleksandr Ilin, the newspaper's chief editor, explains what happened to the newspaper:

"'The foreign partners of the editorial office now seem to have once again conceived the intention of sweeping the newspaper under the carpet. Who are they? Its "rescuers" in April 1992, at a time of almost total financial impotence.

"'It would, however, be possible not to place the quotation marks around the word "rescuers." PRAVDA employees are not Ivans of unknown ancestry or Aytmatov's zombies bereft of their history. Without any reservation we greatly appreciated the assistance (and, incidentally, we repeatedly spoke about this frankly in front of various audiences, some extremely hostile to foreigners) which Greek entrepreneur Mr. Yannis Yannikos originally gave the Russian newspaper which, he said, had played a salutary role in his own tragic destiny. We believed in the idealism of our relationship, although we could see how stern our benefactor was, laying down the course of his relations with PRAVDA for years and decades to come. Then the moment came when it turned out that "partner" was an entirely market-based concept, that whoever had the thicker package of shares was master of the situation. It was then that it was discovered that lines which could make PRAVDA

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a plaything in the hands of its farsighted "rescuer" had been written into the 1992 contract between our partner and the editorial office at the insistence of the other side....

"'...The payment of wages, leave entitlement, everything, is made dependent on the journalists' "loyalty" to the joint-stock company's interests. On the other hand, numerous "colleagues" at PRAVDA-5, AKROPOL, BOLELSHCHIK, and other publications which are pure partners have no such problems....

"'...Russia really does not have any disinterested friends; it has claimants to its treasures, both material and spiritual....'

"PRAVDA is not alone in its struggle for survival. It cannot be otherwise. State Duma committee chairmen V. Gusev, V. Zorkaltsev, V. Ilyukhin, Yu. Maslyukov, A. Sokolov, and G. Tikhonov have come out in its defense and sent Yannikos a letter, to which, however, he has not yet replied. The Moscow Workers Council has appealed to the workers of Russia and to all working people of the former republics of the USSR to show worker solidarity and to give their own newspaper mass, organized, material support, if only in tiny amounts.

"PRAVDA has constantly received letters from its readers during the time that it has not been appearing, since 25 July. 'I will go to law over every issue and demand compensation for moral damage,' V.S. Sharapov writes from Ufa. The Khitrov family from Lipetsk declares: 'We do not want to read PRAVDA-5 instead of the genuine PRAVDA. There can only be one truth [pravda] despite all sorts of "courses."' 'I am of the very people who have been fooled and duped ever since the start of this damned "catastroyka" of Yeltsin's. I have stopped watching television programs and listening to the radio, and I do not read their democratic newspapers. I am waiting for the mailman to drop the latest issue of PRAVDA through my letterbox.... You cannot stifle or kill the truth. It will make its way through to readers just the same, to the ordinary working people who have been deprived of their fair share by the powers that be today. I am not asking but demanding an end to the terrorizing of the editorial collective of PRAVDA, the newspaper impatiently awaited by its readers and subscribers.' This is the view of V. Yershova from Yeysk.

"What, in actual fact, must be done? There is a way out, the newspaper tells its subscribers. Each of them has the right to demand that proceedings be instituted with regard to a violation of consumer rights and that the violator be called to account as provided for in law."

Military Issues

Russia: Tsoy, Rokhlin Deplore Army's Plight

MM2608120796 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 23 Aug 96 pp 1,2

[Report by Nikolay Sautin of the State Duma Press Service: "Those Who Light Fires Near Powder Kegs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The unrelenting combat actions in Chechnya and the scandalous cases of bribery and corruption among Russian generals make the Army a more topical theme than ever. But, against the background of the hundreds of casualties in the Caucasian carnage and the billions of rubles embezzled by military leaders, the distressing and sometimes tragic daily life of the garrisons sometimes thousands of kilometers away from the war has been pushed into the background.

Valentin Tsoy, State Duma deputy for No. 5 Khabarovskiy Electoral District, recently visited his voters at the Anastasyevskiy garrison. He went there at the request (!) of the district Military Prosecutor's Office which has repeatedly asked Colonel General V. Chichevatov, commander of the Far East Military District, to save soldiers from mass infection. Because of damage to this garrison's water pipe, drinking water became mixed with sewage.... Citing the absence of federal funding, the general brushed the prosecutors aside. The result was dramatic — in the past 49 days the hospital has admitted 326 servicemen. The diagnosis — dysentery and hepatitis. Doctors were unable to save four of the soldiers.

It was in this same garrison six months ago that there was another emergency which was hushed up. On that occasion the new draft of youngsters arrived at their military units in the depths of winter. The young men somehow survived the cold weather. But the hunger.... Between January and April 320 previously strong and healthy young men ended up in medical institutions in the Far East Military District diagnosed as suffering from "chronic malnutrition." Private M. Kubarskiy, a draftee from Yaroslavl Oblast, died from dystrophy.

Chief Military Prosecutor V. Panichev and Major General V. Litvintsev, deputy commander of the Far East Military District, learned of State Duma Deputy V. Tsoy's desire to visit the hapless garrison and wished him success "in carrying out the program to visit military unit No. 12908 for the purpose of determining the real situation regarding the protection of servicemen's life and health." Even with the good wishes of two such eminent officials, however, the Russian parliamentarian was still left standing outside the military unit's gates.

After V. Tsoy tabled a deputy's question, Colonel of Justice V. Gorelik, acting military prosecutor of the Far

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East Military District, helped to clarify at least partially this mystery which is both demeaning and a matter for the law. His reply deserves to be quoted in full:

"To Comrade V.Ye. Tsoy, deputy of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma.

"I report: That according to Article 5, Section 2 of the Federal Law 'On the Status of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council Deputy and the Status of Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma Deputy,' a State Duma deputy's credentials are documents allowing the right...to visit military units unhindered." [closing quotemark as published]

"At the same time on 14 April 1996 the Far East Military District headquarters received directive No. 172/32Sh of the Armed Forces General Staff dated 3 April 1996, Point 2 of which instructs commanders of all ranks 'to organize visits and meetings between servicemen and deputies only with the permission of superior staffs and must state in advance the place of the meeting, the participants, and the content and thrust of speeches.'

"The aforementioned directive is a legally binding departmental normative act. In accordance with Article 4, Point 2 of the Russian Federation Constitution, federal laws are paramount on all Russian Federation territory. Hence the directive, which contravenes this part of the Federal Law 'On the Status of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council Deputy and the Status of Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma Deputy,' is illegal."

Deputy V. Tsoy, of course, visited the garrison's units anyway. What he saw there shocked him so much that he sent a message of desperation to V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government, and Yu. Skuratov, Russian Federation general prosecutor. Now he is waiting for the first sittings of the fall parliamentary session to begin so as to publicize his investigation from the Federal Assembly platform.

But there is another deputy who does not intend to wait for the fall — he is General Lev Rokhlin, chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee. He is convinced that an explosive situation has built up in the Armed Forces. There is still no common organ of power and authority to coordinate the efforts of monitoring the power structures.

Rokhlin has issued a statement for the press entitled "On the Explosive Situation in the Army."

Six days ago at the 8th Guard's Army Corps 242d Motorized Rifle Regiment, Senior Lieutenant Kharushev, company deputy commander for educational work, committed suicide because of delays in the payment of his wages leading to a difficult material situation, inability to provide for his family, his child's hunger-related fainting fits, and his landlords' demands to quit his apartment (for non-payment of rent).

This is not the only such instance in the Armed Forces.

This year 392 servicemen have died as a result of incidents in the Army and the Navy. Almost one-third of them committed suicide. The number of suicides committed when off-duty has risen sharply — by 20 percent. Among officers it has risen by 28 percent. In most cases these tragedies are due to the significant lowering in servicemen's living standard and the disastrous situation regarding pay of all kinds.

As a former corps commander I cannot be indifferent to the fact that it is not only in Chechnya, Tajikistan, and other trouble spots but also in garrisons and military towns today that servicemen and members of their families are falling sick and dying and that officers' families are consequently breaking up.

The critical situation which has developed in the Army demands resolute intervention by the president, the government, and all society.

Judge for yourselves. As of 19 August 1996 the budget's total debt to the Armed Forces exceeded 15 trillion rubles [R]. This means that servicemen have not received their pay — their only means of existence — for several months now and that compensation for food rations, the subletting of housing, and child allowances have not been paid for 6-12 months.

There have been frequent occasions when servicemen have been notified of the death of close relatives but have been unable to go to the funeral.

A sometimes tragic situation is developing in servicemen's families. Take, for example, Captain Nikolay Sharovarenko, a company commander. He serves in Kaluga. He went to Moscow in despair at having his problems sorted out locally. He has the same kind of problems as many of his fellow officers. He has two children. His wife recently underwent an operation. The doctors recommended an improvement in diet. But how is that possible when an apartment costs R400,000 a month and he has not received his pay — R675,000 a month — for two months? What else can the officer do?

How resilient do you need to be to serve and command a company despite all this?

With each passing day more and more servicemen openly express dissatisfaction with their difficult material situation and indignation at the state's failure to

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meet its guarantees on their social protection and the protection of members of their families. There have already been cases of open protest and even the formation of strike committees.

I shall cite just a few examples.

An Air Defense Forces aviation regiment, Kursk. On 26 July this year some women blockaded the air strip because of the failure to pay their husbands' wages.

An aviation unit, Engels. On 6 June this year servicemen's wives also blockaded the airstrip and sent a complaint to the president and the State Duma.

The Pacific Fleet. Because of the nonpayment of wages servicemen's wives attempted to prevent submarines going on alert duty.

The Urals Military District. Servicemen's wives carrying placards went to the Yekaterinburg City Administration building to demand that their husbands' wage arrears be settled.

The situation is like a powder keg surrounded by fire.

The lack of funding is making it impossible not only to implement the army reform but even to carry out a simple reduction of the troops for economy reasons.

At the same time other power structures are expanding unchecked. In terms of numerical strength the Internal Troops are as large as the Ground Forces. In the Border Guard Troops the number of generals or, in simple terms, those who "look after number one," has doubled.... The Ministry for Affairs of Civil Defense, Emergency Situations, and Elimination of Natural Disasters is trying to increase its staff by 20,000. All these departments are pursuing their own narrow interests. There is no single administrative organ over them which could counter certain leaders' ambitions. There is no common security concept for the country which would outline the limits of the powers and responsibilities of each power structure. And all is taking place despite the state's poverty and the growing discontent in the Army.

To avert the negative consequences of this situation and prevent a conflagration, it is necessary to:

— settle the Army's debts without delay;

— revise the budget for the last quarter of 1996;

— set the Army's 1997 budget at no less than 5.1 percent of GDP;

— ensure the funding of the army reform;

— create a real organ with power over all the power structures which is able to moderate the ambitions of individual leaders and save material resources within the state framework.

By all accounts, Lev Rokhlin, despairing of finding understanding among the leadership, skeptical of the roles currently being performed by Baturin and Lebed, and already disillusioned about the significance of his Duma role as chairman of the Defense Committee, has resorted to the only weapon available to him — public opinion. Only public opinion, the general believes, can save the country from the unpredictable: armed revolt by men in uniform.

Russia: Kokoshin Takes Part in Session on Long-Term Armaments Program

MM2608131096 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Aug 96 p 1

["Own Information" report: "Arms Program Discussed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] First Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Kokoshin has taken part in a session of the Ministry of the Defense Industry Scientific and Technical Council chaired by Zinoviy Pak, minister of the defense industry.

Questions of the implementation of the long-term arms program drawn up jointly by the Defense Ministry, the Ministry of the Defense Industry, and the Ministry of the Economy, and currently being examined by the Russian Federation Government, were discussed.

Andrey Kokoshin briefed the conference participants on the work done by the Defense Ministry and the General Staff to draw up a draft plan for the reform of the Russian Armed Forces envisaging the clarification of a whole package of tasks for the Army and Navy by the top command staff in the event of the proposed draft being ratified. The proposed draft reform program envisages increasing the importance of defense research and development in order to create the scientific and technical groundwork for Army and Navy rearmament. This aspect of the reform was also noted during the speech by Russian Federation Defense Minister Igor Rodionov at the North Caucasus Military District command staff military training camp at Volgograd 20 August this year. This approach, the Defense Ministry and industry representatives stressed, could in its turn require the clarification of a number of provisions of the submitted arms program.

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Russia: Tax Inspectorate Penalizes Defense Ministry

LD2708084396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0555 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Eduard Popov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vladivostok, 27 Aug (ITAR-TASS) — Ten billion rubles [R] are to be confiscated from the Ministry of Defense and the Federal Border Service after these authorities failed to pay the Varyag, Izumrud, and Dalpribor companies for products made to order for them. The decision to confiscate was made by the Maritime Territory tax inspectorate, which impounded products made by the companies as part of the state defense order.

This is a case of companies getting into financial difficulties because of not being paid and thus being unable to meet their own obligations to the state. We are reassigning their arrears to the customers, ITAR-TASS was told by the head of the Maritime Territory tax inspectorate's press office, Vladimir Pologutin.

The tax inspectorate's decision sets a precedent that could apply to other manufacturers as well. For example, the Progress company, which makes the [Kamov] Black Shark helicopters owes R38 billion to the state while state enterprises owe it more than R50 billion. Until now, this cash-strapped company has been made to pay off its arrears to the state in the form of its own products or assets.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Zavgayev Opposes 'Transfer of Power to Terrorists'

LD2708103996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1020 GMT 27 Aug 960

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, August 27 (Interfax) — Moscow-backed Chechen government leader Doku Zavgayev dismissed a proposal to postpone the question of Chechnya's status within the Russian Federation for five years — a possible compromise variant in negotiations between the federal authorities and the Chechen opposition.

"What delayed status can a constituent member of the Russian Federation have? In line with the Constitution Chechnya is one of Russia's constituent members. Thus the proposal on delayed status is a violation of the Basic Law," Zavgayev told Interfax Tuesday.

He also opposes proposals on a referendum on Chechnya's status. "The people do not demand this; a group of terrorists demands this."

Commenting on the current situation in Chechnya and on talks between Moscow's representatives and separatist leaders, Zavgayev said that "if one does not stop transfer of power to terrorists then we (Russia — IF) will face a large-scale war with the Caucasus in the future and will finally lose the Caucasus."

Asked whether mass media reports stating that Zavgayev has only about 7,000 armed supporters in Chechnya's Nadterechny region, Chechnya's Prime Minister Nikolai Koshman said: "There are more. Do not forget about other regions. For example, there are about 40,000 citizens of Urus-Martan who were traditionally in opposition to Dudayev's fighters. There are about 80,000 refugees there now, they were forced to leave the capital and other populated centers due to the combat operations of rebels."

Both Zavgayev and Koshman refused to comment when asked how many people are ready to support them in a conflict against separatist fighters.

Zavgayev reported that as many as four attempts against his life have been prevented in recent months.

Russia: Zavgayev Blames Lebed for 'Fall' of Groznyy, 'Second Coup'

LD2708115196 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Members of Doku Zavgayev's Government are almost continually holding press conferences in Moscow. He can often be heard and his accusations are becoming ever sharper. Doku Zavgayev, the head of Chechnya, has accused Aleksandr Lebed of organizing a coup in Chechnya.

[Begin Zavgayev recording] It is my understanding that a coup was organized from here, from Moscow. It will be the second coup. After the 1991 coup, autumn 1991. [end recording]

Whether the head of the government's support for Lebed meant Chernomyrdin participated in the coup was a question that went unanswered. As for Lebed himself, Zavgayev felt Lebed was man who very much wants peace but is very short-sighted from a political point of view. He does not know the nature of the Chechen crisis, or the intricacies of the internal ethnic set-up. Moreover, Zavgayev is very dubious of the behind-the-scenes nocturnal meetings with dubious, unsavory people.

[Begin Zavgayev recording] These "heroes" of Budennovsk, Kizlyar, Pervomayskoye, Groznyy and others with the permission of Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed receive legalization, they are today receiving power. [passage omitted]

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I repeat again, and I do not think I will repudiate what I say: The town of Groznyy was surrendered on the personal orders of Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed. [end recording]

Zavgayev also asked journalists to be quiet about his movements. Evidently, this was in response to a report of the head of Chechnya's frequent stays near the airport.

[Begin Zavgayev recording] One report says "there he goes in his front door" another says "here he is coming out of his front door". I am head of a constituent part of Russia and I need to move about the country. Now I shall be making trips abroad, which is no surprise. Very busy foreign trips. I travel all the time. I shall go to Groznyy when I think necessary. [end recording]

Russia: Lebed Spokesman Dismisses Zavgayev's Accusations

LD2708112396 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] We have contacted Aleksandr Barkhatov, spokesman for Russian Federation Security Council secretary Aleksandr Lebed, and asked him to comment on the accusations put forward by Doku Zavgayev.

[Barkhatov] By accusing Aleksandr Ivanovich [Lebed] and his real achievements at reaching a settlement, he [Zavgayev] in effect accuses all those who work in this team, including the prime minister and the president. He [Zavgayev] goes as far as suggesting that Groznyy's surrender on 6 August, and not only on this particular date, was sanctioned by Aleksandr Ivanovich. But we know that Aleksandr Ivanovich was appointed as the [president's] plenipotentiary representative in Chechnya by the decree of 10 August. And how is it possible, therefore, to blame Lebed for what happened before his appointment, or to blame him for establishing the cease-fire and making some real progress at the talks? I believe that in this situation and with the president's and the prime minister's approval, he has chosen the most realistic way to resolve this situation.

[Announcer] Why do you think Zavgayev reacted the way he did to everything that has been done by Lebed?

[Barkhatov] I interpret it as a reaction of someone who does not control the situation in Chechnya and is therefore envious of someone else's success there. But what should really matter first of all are not personalities, but peace which Aleksandr Ivanovich is establishing in Chechnya.

Russia: Lebed Criticized for Opposing Suspension of Chechnya Funding

MK2708113796 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 27 Aug 96 p 1

[Report by 'Repair and Construction Administration No. 315': "As Long as Fools Remain in the World.... The Chechen Provisional Government Demands That the Show Go On. Does Lebed Get His Share?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nowadays there can probably be no more profitable operation than money turnover in Chechnya. Neither counterfeit advice notes, nor the creation of financial pyramids, nor the gambling on the market of Treasury bonds can compare with the windfall profits from participation in the restoration of the Chechen economy.

What can be more profitable and reliable than money laundering through the construction of residential areas, schools, hospitals, and kindergartens in a city where war is under way?

According to figures of the Russian Construction Ministry, a total of 1,400 square meters of living space was restored in the Chechen capital during last year alone. This work required a spending of 900 billion rubles (R). Another 366 billion rubles have been spent to restore utilities and health-care, social insurance, and education facilities.

In the meantime, construction workers have not been paid since November, and the treasury already owes them as much as R800 billion.

Yet, the Russian Construction Ministry has not yet commissioned a single facility, be it a school or an apartment block, said Musa Dzhamalkhalov, deputy chief of the foreign economic relations department of the Chechen Government. The appropriations have effectively been just moved from one pocket to another. For instance, they simply whitewashed the front of a house, but the house was subsequently listed as having been "renovated." Furthermore, commissions accepted the buildings without even leaving Moscow, although huge travel allowances and "wartime" salaries have been paid to Moscow bureaucrats on a regular basis.

According to Alkhazur Tsakayev, deputy chairman of the Chechen Government, federal ministries have set up their territorial branches in Chechnya, through which money has been transferred from Moscow to Chechnya and back again. That is to say, the money never left Moscow, but on paper and according to accounting documents it is listed as spent on restoration.

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Out of the 33 banks that are authorized to carry out financial operations in Chechnya, 17 simply have engaged in a rapid turnover of state funds.

In short, money in Chechnya evaporates as water on a frying pan. The latest seizure of Groznyy by the rebels has enabled the bureaucrats to write off yet another couple of trillions of rubles. However, according to news agency reports, Chechen Prime Minister Nikolay Koshman has said that the government of Chechnya was ready to embark on new construction projects even yesterday. In his words, it has first of all to restore the utilities sector and electricity supply to the Chechen capital, which is still controlled by the rebels. A theater of the absurd with special effects to boot! The city is in the hands of bandits, but a provisional government that has lost its bearings demands yet more capital investment. To do so is like putting gold crowns on a dead man's teeth. Currently neither Zavgayev nor Koshman, nor anyone else among the "official" Chechen rulers can make decisions or be held accountable for anything. They never actually have been, though.

The president has finally moved to stop releasing money for the restoration of what has been destroyed in Chechnya. Naturally, this decision has elicited an outcry of indignation from "interested persons," for whom the opportunity to line their pockets is more important than anything else. They did not stop at casualties among innocent construction workers, of whom more than 100 have already been killed, or thousands of lives of Russian servicemen and the civilian population. How high should the pile of dead bodies be for them finally to satisfy their appetite?

When thieves and killers go on doing their dirty business, this is disgusting but at least understandable. But when similar tones begin to be audible in the voice of a man appointed to defend our country's national security, this is absolutely inexplicable....

Russian Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed, presidential representative in Chechnya, has "expressed his astonishment" at the decision to suspend the financing of the war-torn republic. "This means," Lebed said, "that people will remain without pensions, benefits, and, generally speaking, without any assistance as the winter approaches." In his words, Chechen residents are "hungry people, who haven't got a kopeck of money or a home, while the latest escalation of fighting has deprived 80,000 families of shelter and apartments. How can this impasse be overcome?"

Aleksandr Ivanovich [Lebed] appears to be unaware of the fact that the money that has disappeared without a trace in Chechnya during the past year alone would have been enough to build a city for 400,000 people from scratch in any region of Russia, supplying its population with gas, electricity, fuel, work, and, most importantly, security. Yet it is possible that our views on the security of citizens and the state may differ somewhat from those of the authorized general. In this case those who are still alive in Groznyy can hardly be envied.

Russia: Maskhadov Urges Keeping Chechnya Peace Process on Track

LD2608141196 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0945 GMT 26 Aug 96

[Interview with Aslan Maskhadov, Chechen opposition chief of staff, by Aleksandr Plyushchev on 25 August; place not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Maskhadov] It's a shame that General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov and his superiors always link talks — which are purely practical moves towards a settlement — with provocations. These provocations have taken place and will continue to do so and it is impossible to stop them completely.

I found this roving group [which disarmed an Interior Ministry column] today. I found the specific culprit. That culprit has been arrested. The weapons will be handed over to the Russian side in the very nearest future. I gave my word that our side would honor the deal no matter what happens, and I will try to keep it. And it would be wrong to call off my meeting with Tikhomirov because of this incident.

I think that General Lebed, importantly, understands the main point at issue: that both Chechnya and Russia need these talks. Holding these talks with a sincere desire to halt this war, General Lebed wants to save the face of the Russian state, the Russian power. Others who wrap themselves in the flag in fact shame the state. General Lebed, on the contrary, wants to save the state's face. It is therefore vital that General Lebed correctly understands the situation and sincerely wishes to stop the war.

Some mistrust or doubts that we might have on our part are a different matter. We have plenty of grounds for them, arising from earlier talks. This is the third document that I have signed, after the military agreement of 30 July last year and the Nazran accords. But this time, there is confidence that if Lebed can stop the forces that don't want to see the war end or can't bring themselves to end it, then in all likelihood the outcome will be successful.

[Plyushchev] There have been reports of a plot being prepared to kill General Lebed. How realistic in your view is a repeat of what happened to General Romanov?

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[Maskhadov] This is what I fear most, an attack similar to that which befell General Romanov last year. Although the Russia side still claims the Chechens did it, I still say, especially now, that it was of no benefit to the Chechen side that Romanov departed and Shkirko or Tikhomirov arrived, because in Romanov we saw a man who had had his fill of the fighting and really did want to stop the war with the same sincerity as Lebed today. The reasons for what happened to Romanov must be sought, because therein lie the terrible forces that are now doing all they can to hinder the peace process. The same goes for Lebed today. If, for example, anything should happen to Lebed, that would lead to a new surge in fighting. Everyone in Russia and Chechnya who really does want to end this war should use every endeavor to prevent a repeat.

[Plyushchev] I have two questions that are linked to each other. Firstly, have there been any provocations by Russian troops and secondly, are there many of these uncontrolled rogue bands who could attack Russian troops, go on the rampage and so on? Uncontrolled by the Chechen command, I mean.

[Maskhadov] We have said and continue to say that all the units that entered Groznyy — about 5,000 men — are completely under our control and command. There is a single chain of command. The groups like the one in question — a rogue band — do exist, and I think they are a real enemy both to us and to the other side. And I think we should act together to remove them.

Russia: Tikhomirov, Maskhadov Meet To Discuss Cease-Fire Accord

LD2708064296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0638 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — Russian commander in Chechnya Vyacheslav Tikhomirov and Chechen separatist chief of staff Aslan Maskhadov met on Tuesday to discuss the implementation of the ceasefire agreement in the rebel republic.

The meeting, which has been several times postponed, began in the village of Novyye Atagi, 15 kilometres from Groznyy, Tass learned from the federal command in Chechnya.

"During the talks the parties aim to consider a protocol on the practical implementation of the ceasefire agreement, as well as on the bloc of military issues, in particular, about a complete return of the weapons seized by Chechen separatists from federal servicemen on Saturday", a command spokesman said.

If successful, the Tikhomirov-Maskhadov meeting is expected to open the way for the Russian withdrawal from Groznyy.

Russia: Tikhomirov, Maskhadov Sign Protocol To Enforce Chechen Cease-Fire

LD2708101496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0954 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] South Chechnya, Aug 27 (Interfax) — Russian military commander in Chechnya Vyacheslav Tikhomirov and Chechen separatist military leader Aslan Maskhadov signed a joint protocol at 1 p.m. Tuesday in Novyye Atagi, 25 kilometers to the south of Groznyy.

The opposition headquarters told Interfax the protocol on joint initial steps related to enforcement of the cease-fire agreement provides for the resumption of the simultaneous withdrawal of federal and separatist formations from Groznyy on Wednesday morning.

The document also implies the redeployment of joint federal-rebel staff from all district commandant's offices in Groznyy by 6 p.m.

Under the agreement, each office will contain a maximum of 60 men from each side.

Russia: 'Several Versions' of Chechen Accord Under Consideration

LD2608182096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1810 GMT 26 Aug 96

[By Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, August 26 (Itar-Tass) — The Security Council and a number of other organisations are considering several versions of a draft agreement on the status of Chechnya, council spokesman Aleksandr Barkhatov said.

One of the versions calls for both a referendum and elections in Chechnya.

During his recent trip to the republic, Russian Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed said such an agreement requires thorough consideration and preparation, including from the legal point of view.

Barkhatov noted that in addition to Security Council experts, the work on the draft agreement involves representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Nationalities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the president's state and law department.

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Russia: Chechen Interior Ministry Reportedly Set on Fire

LD2708114096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1125 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Aug 27 (Interfax) — The Chechen Interior Ministry building in the center of Groznyy was set on fire Tuesday, Chechen Deputy Prime Minister Yunadiy Usamov told Interfax over the phone from Groznyy.

"The aim of this action is to oust Chechen police still in the city center from the buildings of the Interior Ministry and Federal Security Service," Usamov said. "This provocation was carried out with the silent consent of the personnel of the newly created Central Joint Military Police Office."

The Chechen policemen were ordered to retreat toward Severnyy airport, "but they continue to hold positions in the center of Groznyy," he said.

The separatists are forming their own power bodies in a number of cities and villages in Chechnya, Usamov said. Separatist flags are being hoisted in Gudermes, Argun and Achkhoy-Martan, he said.

Russia: Chechen Separatists Return All Seized Weapons

LD2708084596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0826 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By Nikolay Zagnoiko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — Chechen separatists returned all seized weapons to the Russian military on Tuesday thus removing the main obstacle which delayed talks on the implementation of the ceasefire agreement in Chechnya.

Tass learned from the Russian military command that the Chechens had returned the five remaining submachine guns which had been seized from a Russian convoy on Saturday.

Another three submachine guns, having nothing to do with the Saturday incident and belonging to a federal road block, will be returned later.

All in all, the Chechens have returned 58 submachine guns in accordance with the numbers embossed on them.

Major General Georgiy Georgiyev contacted the Russian force commander Vyacheslav Tikhomirov and informed him that all the weapons had been returned. Tikhomirov is holding talks with Chechen separatist chief of staff Aslan Maskhadov in Novyye Atagi.

Chieftain Hankar-pasha Isparilov, who was entrusted by Maskhadov with the implementation of the peace agreement in Groznyy, said the militants who had seized the weapons had been detained and criminal proceedings had been instituted against them.

Practically all Chechen commanders took part in the search for the seized weapons, including Maskhadov himself, Isparilov said.

Russia: Chechen Field Commander Says Joint Patrols Operating

AU2608152396 Paris AFP in English 1459 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, Russia, Aug 26 (AFP) — The Chechen rebels Monday [26 August] handed back weapons seized from Russian troops, clearing the way for further peace talks, rebel chief of staff Aslan Maskhadov told reporters.

Meanwhile, an official at the Russian military command told INTERFAX news agency that the rebels had failed to return all the weapons seized in Groznyy on Saturday.

Maskhadov said 53 firearms were handed back to representatives of the Russian command, and he hoped the handover would clear the way for his meeting with Russian military commander General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, which had been postponed amid a row over the incident.

Maskhadov said the gunmen who seized the weapons were not under his command, and their leader had been arrested.

A Russian command spokesman said the rebels had handed back 51 out of a total of 60 machine-guns, and the serial numbers of half of them did not correspond to those of the seized weapons.

"This does not give us grounds to say Saturday's incident is over," the spokesman said.

Originally scheduled for Sunday, the Maskhadov-Tikhomirov talks were postponed, and the Russian military command said its troops in Groznyy would not leave their positions until all the weapons were returned.

Under a truce signed Thursday, Russian troops are to withdraw to the outskirts of the city and also pull back from the southern mountains to bases in the lowlands.

The military command said the withdrawal from the mountains had already started.

A Chechen field commander in Groznyy, Aslambek Ismailov, told AFP that the joint patrols which the Russians and Chechen rebels were to organise in the city were already operating.

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He said the first joint police posts would appear in Groznyy Tuesday, and groups of armed rebels would start leaving the city the same day.

In line with the truce accord, only the 540 members of the joint patrols — 270 from each side — are to remain in central Groznyy, to prevent looting and armed provocations.

"If we find looters we will execute them immediately," Ismailov said.

Russia: Internal Troops Report 163 Dead, 876 Wounded Since 6 Aug

LD2608160696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1550 GMT 26 Aug 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 26 Aug (ITAR-TASS) — Since 6 August, 163 servicemen of the internal troops have been killed in Chechnya. Some 876 have been wounded. An ITAR-TASS correspondent was told this at the headquarters of the internal troops command at Khankala.

At the present moment, lists of the overall losses of internal troop subunits in Chechnya, as well as servicemen who are missing, are being clarified.

Russia: Seven Interior Ministry Soldiers Flee From Chechen Captivity

LD2708084096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0628 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Aug 27 (Interfax) — Seven Interior Ministry troops fled from Chechen captivity and returned to the positions of federal troops Monday night, Interfax was told by the press bureau of the force.

The men were kept by a Chechen militant group in the area of Alleroy. When they fled last Saturday they managed to disarm and destroy seven gunmen, a spokesman for the press bureau said.

The servicemen captured between May 31 and July 25 brought trophies: three automatic rifles, a machine gun, a grenade launcher and 21 grenades.

The press bureau listed the names of the seven servicemen: Sgt. Ilshat Pudoyarov, Lance Cpl. Fedor Permyakov, Lance Cpl. Pavel Korpunov and privates Sergey Shepanov, Nikolay Kurganskiy, Andrey Vopilov and Aleksandr Moshev.

Russia: Reporter Speaks to Former Combatants in Groznyy

AU2608165696 Paris AFP in English 1631 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, Russia, Aug 26 (AFP) — Sasha from Moscow and Katar from Chechnya clasped hands for the camera in a gesture of reconciliation.

"I'll be glad to be out of here, this war wasn't our war," Sasha said. Katar, a grizzled veteral of 40 and armed to the teeth, nodded agreement.

The young Russian conscript dumped his kit on the back of a Russian armoured car.

"We lost this war and it doesn't surprise me," he said. "We were fighting because it's just our job, but they were fighting to defend their people and every people has the right to freedom."

The Chechen rebel nodded further approval.

Only a few days ago Katar and his men were laying siege to Sasha's army post. Now, with the calling of a ceasefire between Russians and Chechen rebel fighters, the two soldiers are cooperating in dismantling this Russian checkpoint.

But what if Russia refuses to recognise Chechnya's independence?

Katar tapped his assault rifle and laughed heartily, displaying glittering array of gold teeth. "I've got my answer ready."

While an uneasy peace reigned in Chechnya, Russia's security chief Aleksander Lebed, who arranged the ceasefire, was in Moscow preparing to meet President Boris Yeltsin on the next stages of the peace.

Katar said of Lebed: "He's a good bloke. The people are with him."

Katar is one of the separatist fighters detailed to supervise the withdrawal of Russian units from the centre of the Chechen capital Groznyy.

The surrounding area is a scene of almost apocalyptic destruction, of mutilated buildings around what was once the presidential palace, and streets littered with spent shells and all the other detritus of war.

What the initial Russian intervention — in December 1994 — to suppress the Chechen independence movement left intact, this month's surprise Chechen rebel assault on the city has finished off.

When the main part of the withdrawal is over there will be no more than 270 Russian soldiers in the centre of

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town, engaged in joint patrols with Chechens under the terms of an accord Lebed worked out with the rebel leadership.

Implementation of the agreement was suspended Sunday because the Russians wanted the return of weapons which rebel units had confiscated from a Russian unit.

The Chechens said they would do their best to sort out the misunderstanding.

The streets were full of "Boeviki" — the Russian name for the Chechen fighters — piled on to the back of four-wheel drive vehicles flying the green flag of Islam — the religion of Chechnya — and sporting pictures of the late President Dzhokhar Dudayev whose unilateral independence drive prompted Yeltsin to send in his troops.

One of the patrols drove past the Russian post which Sasha and Katar were dismantling. The Chechens greeted Katar with fists aloft and repeated cries of "Allah u Akbar!" (Allah is great)

The faces registered neither hate nor the desire for revenge but the simple joy of anticipated victory.

Sasha, the local Russian post commander, refused to treat the cry as something provocative. Grinning broadly, he explained with what appeared to be wishful thinking:

"The Chechens say 'Allah u Akbar' just like we say hello. It's perfectly natural."

Around Groznyy's central square, in all directions lies nothing but ruination. The undamaged buildings can be counted on one hand.

On Monday morning the Russians took away their dead. Some bodies, exposed to strong sunlight for the two past weeks, were in an advanced state of decomposition.

Issa, a 19-year-old Chechen on guard duty in the south side of town, said: "These people are inhuman. They're not even interested in their own dead. They were supposed to move the bodies four days ago."

Issa's roadblock consisted of the remains of three tables and a smashed refrigertator, all piled up on the road.

The "Boeviki" routinely checked the trunks of passing cars, but their mood was more one of merrymaking than business. One guard put aside his weapon to take up a needle and thread and repair a tunic torn in the fighting.

The young Chechens on duty here were not from Groznyy and did not know the town's geography. Asked about the name of the avenue whose access they were guarding, they laughed: "Just call it Free Ichkeria Street," one of them suggested. Ichkeria is the name the Chechens give to the rebel republic.

Economic Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Decree Aims at Combatting Tax Evasion

LD2708085096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0301 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Aug 26 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin's decree on rationalizing the collection of income tax and insurance premiums levied on individuals is due solely to the need to tighten fiscal discipline and combat tax-dodging by individuals, reads a statement circulated by Yeltsin's press service on Monday.

The decree does not envisage any restrictions regarding tax breaks under existing fiscal legislation, the press service said.

"This approach will certainly be respected during preparation by the Finance Ministry and the State Tax Service of instructions concerning this decree's application," the presidential press service said.

The decree aims at combatting unreported conversion of bank account funds into cash and, consecutively, tax dodging by some categories of the population, the press service said.

The press service cited tax evasion resulting from weak control over spending by private companies of money transferred by companies to private accounts. The money is later freely converted into cash without paying taxes or other duties to the budget.

Bank operations regarding the accounts of individuals will not be additionally taxed, the press service said.

Under the decree, if a company gives a loan to its employees at a low interest rate or interest-free, this latent subsidy is to be taken into account on the basis of the Central bank refinancing rate, when the company's profits liable for taxation are counted.

"The measures may seem rather harsh but they will affect only a small group of citizens who receive high revenues and willingly avoid payment of taxes by using loopholes in tax regulations," the statement reads.

The decree is a non-enforcing act and requires development of additional legislation for its full enactment, the press office said. Federal executive organs responsible for its implementation (the Finance Ministry, State Tax Service) will follow existing regulations, primarily the law on individual income tax and the law on the basic

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principles of Russia's tax system, in their activities, the statement reads.

"The decree is thus aimed at fighting tax evasion by citizens with high incomes," the press office said.

"The president had to issue the decree because many of its provisions have been considered by the State Duma for a long time but do not get approved, although it is a matter of restoring basic social justice," the statement reads.

Russia: Tax Inspector Confiscates Defense Ministry Property

LD2708085896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0748 GMT 27 Aug 96

[By Eduard Popov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VLADIVOSTOK, Russian Far East, August 27 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian Defence Ministry and the Federal Border Service will have to pay ten billion roubles which they did not pay, as customers, to the Varyag, Izumrud and Dalpribor joint stock societies for products manufactured by these enterprises for the Russian military-industrial complex.

This decision was taken by the tax inspection of the Maritime Territory which clamped a property arrest on manifactures of these enterprises, made under a state defence order.

"We have faced a case when the enterprises got into difficult economic straits due to non-payments and are unable to make settlements with the state. We shall re-address their debts to customers, Vladimir Pologutin, the press centre head of the tax police administration for the Maritime Territory, said in an interview with Itar-Tass here on Tuesday.

The decision of the tax inspection creates a precedent which can be spread to other enterprises. For instance, the Progress aircraft company producing Black Shark helicopters owes 38 billion roubles to the state, while state-owned enterprises owe more than 50 billion roubles to the company.

Up to this time, arrears were exacted only from enterprises which were forced to make settlements with the state with the manufactures and production resources due to absence of cash.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Discusses Fifth Anniversary of Independence

LD2308134496 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1000 GMT 23 Aug 96

["Summary" of an interview with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma by an unidentified UKRINFORM correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The very circumstance in which after five years of an exceptionally difficult constitutional process Ukraine has come to have its constitution cannot fail to provoke certain emotions, Kuchma said, and it is understandable. However, the main law of any state does not only define the main rights and freedoms of its citizens, the authorities of its main institutions and relations between them, but also solidifies at the highest level the legal status of the state. Ukraine's constitution has finally defined its status as a sovereign, independent, democratic, social, law-governed state which gives every ground to the state without any reservations: Ukraine has arrived. Ukraine's path over these fives years cannot be described in just one term, the president continued to say. One has to admit — it was not an easy path. Unfortunately, many bad mistakes have been committed in the economy. The cultural transformation, the denationalization, and price liberalization did not go as desired. Nevertheless, the main vital systems of the country have been working in a more or less stable manner. A new legislative field has been formed which provided initial conditions for market mechanisms and a market infrastructure. We have almost completed financial stabilization and come close to putting an end to the industrial production slump — over the first six months of this year it amounted to just 2.5 percent compared to 12 percent last year. The small-scale privatization has been completed. The large privatization is gaining pace.

Unfortunately, the first major anniversary of the independence coincides with the worsening of the payment crisis. This problem worries society and causes concern to myself as president. The Ukrainian Government is working on solving it.

These five years were not easy, but then we know that new things cannot be created without difficulties, and the overcoming of these difficulties largely depends on us, on our determination, patience, and will. This is why it is important that we should unite around the idea of building independent Ukraine and look jointly for new resources for strengthening the state further, consolidating society, and raising well-being of all citizens.

Ukraine's foreign policy has become much more active lately; the geography of its links has become wider. However, the number of agreements signed or visits made is not an aim in itself for us. The main purpose is to have practical and political results and a specific economic outcome. Pragmatism, realism, and balance must be fully established as main principles of our foreign policy. We already have the first significant results in this direction. These are, in particular, the relevant documents of the European Union, NATO, the Western European Union recognizing independent democratic Ukraine as an important element of international security. Our foremost task is to transform this recognition into specific actions, Kuchma noted. We will apply our efforts in the field of comprehensive diplomacy in order to integrate ourselves with the prominent European and trans-Atlantic structures. We intend, in the nearest time, to join GATT and the WTO and to continue the integration with the European Union. The receipt of the status of the associated partner of the Western European Union, the expansion of relations of a special partnership with NATO, and the receipt of membership in the Central European Agreement on Foreign Trade are also important foreign political landmarks to head for.

Ukraine is certain to continue to play an active role in the UN and the OSCE and in such influential organizations as the Council of Europe and the Central European Initiative, which it has recently joined. Noteworthy is the importance of further development of the relations with the United States, Germany, other G-7 states, and with our neighbours. We will of course be strengthening the cooperation with prominent Asian states, first of all Japan, China, India, South Korea, and others. It is important that we should remove gaps in the relations with developing countries, in particular, Latin American and African countries which represent wide markets for our goods and sources of raw material imports.

CIS countries and Russia in particular are holding, and will always do so, the central place in the system of our foreign political priorities. The reelection of Russian President Boris Yeltsin opens new prospects. Time has come to draw a line under what used to divide us and to bring the Ukrainian-Russian cooperation to the level expected not just by our nations but also by international community.

Some politicians in the country, for this or that reason, rely on the restoration of the USSR. I am convinced that they either fail to understand the essence of the political processes which have been taking place over the past years or intentionally use certain slogans in their narrow party aims. It is hardly necessary to state that the hope of restoring the USSR, moreover in its former form, is an absolute utopia. There are neither economic nor legal

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nor political preconditions for that. Besides, not a single subject of the former USSR desires unification. I think that it is difficult to find precedents in the world history when a state, having a real chance of sovereignty and of organizing the life of its citizens on that basis, should voluntarily reject its aim. I cannot see any alternatives to building a sovereign democratic state.

Another matter is that Ukraine has never failed to participate, and will never do so, in certain integration processes, first of all in the economic sphere, but on the basis of parity and partnership and modern civilized forms.

Ukraine: Russian Naval Commander Comments on Black Sea Fleet Talks

LD2308173596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1300 GMT 23 Aug 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ukraine is celebrating the fifth anniversary of its independence today. According to an RIA-NOVOSTI agency report, Sevastopol has been the focus of the celebrations. A Ukrainian naval parade took place there today.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent I. Gassko] Two days of negotiations between military delegations from Russia and Ukraine on the Black Sea Fleet have ended in Sevastopol. The uncompromising attitude of the Ukrainian side, which continues to see Sevastopol as the main base of its own naval forces and just one of several berths for the Black Sea Fleet, is forcing Russia to seek a home base on its own shores.

[Russian Navy commander Admiral Feliks Gromov] Naturally, you need to have a home base system on your own territory. This is the whole point.

[Gassko] Naval commander Feliks Gromov, who headed the Russian delegation at the talks, left Sevastopol for Novorossiysk, where he inspected the progress in setting up a new base.

In the near future, the results of the talks with Ukraine will show whether Sevastopol will remain the base of the Black Sea Fleet or whether these functions will eventually be handed over to Novorossiysk. [end recording] [video shows Sevastopol street scenes, port with warships, brief interview with Admiral Gromov, and more warships and submarines]

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Issues Decree on Monetary Reform

LD2608195896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1759 GMT 26 Aug 96

["INTERFAX-UKRAINE" news item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With the aim of promoting fundamental free-market reforms in Ukraine, providing the economy with the stable national currency and in keeping with Articles 99 and 102 of the Constitution of Ukraine

I hereby decree:

1. To implement in Ukraine as of September 2, 1996 monetary reform — the putting into circulation of Ukraine's national currency recognized by the Constitution, which is the Hryvnia and its one hundred percent — the kopiyka.

2. The National Bank of Ukraine shall put into circulation as of September 2, 1996 banknotes with the face value of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 100 Hryvnias, and small exchange with the face value of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 kopiykas.

3. The Ukrainian karbovanets shall be exchanged for the Hryvnias (both banknotes and small exchange) at the rate of 100,000 krb per 1 Hryvnia.

4. Starting September 2 through 16, 1996, functioning in the Ukrainian territory in cash money circulation shall be both the Hryvnia and karbovanets, and the latter shall be gradually taken out of circulation.

Starting midnight of September 16, 1996, the functioning of the Ukrainian karbovanets in cash money circulation shall be terminated. From that time on, the sole legitimate instrument of payment in Ukraine's territory shall be the Hryvnia.

5. The bodies of executive power, legal entities and other economic subjects of all forms of ownership shall — starting September 2, 1996 — carry out the conversion from the karbovanets into the Hryvnia in conformity with the established exchange rate of the Ukrainian karbovanets for the Hryvnia without any restrictions, reservations or confiscations:

— the prices, tariff rates, as well as wages, salaries, pensions, student grants, relief aids and other cash money payments to the population with their approximation of up to one kopiyka;

— assets of legal entities and other economic subjects (both residents and non-residents) deposited on the accounts at bank institutions or securities;

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— all types of savings of the population on deposit or other accounts, insurance polices, as well as stocks and other securities, including the privatization papers;

— assets and liabilities and contracts concluded.

6. Starting September 2, 1996, cashless settlements (including money transfer), as well as book-keeping of all the operations and making out accounting reports by legal entities and other economic subjects in all areas of activity shall be carried out in the Hryvnia only.

The Cabinet of Ministers together with the National Bank of Ukraine shall within seven days prepare propositions as regards the procedure of the use of funds deposited in separate special accounts of legal entities and other economic subjects.

7. Payment of wages, salaries, student grants, pensions, relief aids and other cash money payments to the population shall be carried out — starting September 2, 1666 — solely in the Hryvnias without allowing any change in the order and terms of such payments.

8. Bodies of executive power, legal entities and other economic subjects shall register in acts — as by the beginning of work day of September 2, 1996 — the surplus amounts of the Ukrainian karbovanets and deposit them before 17:00 local time on the same day to the bank institutions servicing them.

Bank institutions shall accept for deposition the surplus amounts of the Ukrainian karbovanets as envisaged above, and deposit them in the Hryvnias within the limits of the cash money surplus at the cash offices into the settlement and current accounts of the economic subjects concerned; and in case of sums exceeding the fixed limits of cash money surplus at the cash offices — into the separate special accounts.

9. The Ukrainian population shall exchange the karbovanets cash for the Hryvnia starting September 2 through 16, 1996. The sums up to 100 million karbovanets shall be exchanged for the Hryvnia in cash, and sums exceeding 100 million karbovanets shall be deposited into bank accounts with the right of their free use in the Hryvnias.

Over that period commercial banks shall accept from the population the cash karbovanets into deposits and settlement accounts without any restrictions according to the fixed exchange rate of the karbovanets for the Hryvnia.

10. National Bank institutions shall exchange the karbovanets for the Hryvnia without collecting payment for such an exchange.

The National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) will not consider claims from commercial banks as regards a shortage of the Hryvnias received in undamaged packaging from NBU institutions. National Bank institutions shall accept from commercial banks faulted banknotes and coins and exchange them after appropriate expert control for payment banknotes and small change.

11. The National Bank of Ukraine shall determine the official Hryvnia's rate of exchange for foreign currencies proceeding from National Bank's exchange rate in effect before the monetary reform and the exchange rate of the Karbovanets for Hryvnia.

The official Hryvnia's exchange rate for foreign currencies shall be in effect starting September 2, 1996, and from that time on, the exchange rate of the Ukrainian karbovanets shall not be fixed.

Starting September 2, 1996, the purchase and sale of foreign currencies shall be carried out in the established order only for the Hryvnia.

12. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine shall determine the procedure of the registration by the government securities of the sums of compensation to the citizens of Ukraine for the losses resulting from depreciation of the money deposits at the savings bank institutions and Ukrgosstrah (Ukraine's State Insurance Company) as by September 2, 1996 with the repayment of such securities starting the year of 2000.

13. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine together with the National Bank shall:

— provide the governments and central banks of foreign states with information about the monetary reform in Ukraine, the procedure of putting the Hryvnia into circulation and revaluation of foreign banks' balances of correspondent accounts opened at Ukraine's bank institutions, as well as about the Hryvnia's official rate of exchange.

— resolve the organizational issues involved in ensuring the execution of the said decree and explanation of its provisions in the mass media.

14. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine shall within seven days determine the sources of funding the measures in connection with the monetary reform in Ukraine.

15. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the National Bank, the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, regional and district administrations, the Kiev and Sevastopol city administrations, as well as executive committees of city councils and commercial banks shall ensure proper control over the monetary reform.

16. The State Commission for the execution of the monetary reform and such commissions in provinces

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shall in individual cases be entitled to settle questions of the exchange of the Karbovanets for the Hryvnia by citizens who could not for proper reasons carry out such an exchange, as well as settle disputable issues which may crop up in the course of the monetary reform.

17. The decree shall be effective since the date of its publication.

[Signed] President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma

[Dated] Kiev, August 25, 1996

Ukraine: Lazarenko Comments on Moscow Visit, Currency Reform

LD2608204596 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1800 GMT 26 Aug 96

[Statement by Ukrainian Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko to correspondents in Kiev on 26 August, prior to his departure for Moscow; recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] The government has drafted 18 agreements that need to be discussed with the Russian Government. Not all of them are fully prepared for signing, but everything depends on good will. Among the main issues that need to be discussed and agreed is that of reaching a final understanding on the Black Sea Fleet. The Ukrainian Government is particularly concerned about the Russian Government's debt for municipal services rendered to the Black Sea Fleet at the site of its deployment. This amount exceeds 4 trillion karbovantsi, including charges for electricity, gas, and other utility services. The entire package of documents is ready; we only need good will to agree them.

Other issues that need to be discussed are a final agreement on borders, the property issues involved, and the problem of the Azov Sea which, regrettably, remains unresolved. Another matter of concern is our frozen deposits in the former Soviet Export-Import Bank. All these issues need to be discussed. And what especially concerns the Ukrainian Government today is the unilateral measure introduced several days ago, a decree imposing a 20-percent value-added tax on all goods imported to Russia. You can imagine what negative economic consequences, what problems such measures can inflict on bilateral relations, and therefore we need to work accordingly. I hope to find good will and understanding in Russia, and I think that my meeting with Prime Minister Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin will help to solve the economic problems that have accumulated.

Today is a good occasion to address all my countrymen and all residents of Ukraine. You know that a presidential decree signed yesterday introduces a new currency unit, the hryvnya, as of 2 September, across the entire territory of the state. I want to say one thing: today, there are no grounds for concern. The reform is completely transparent, without restriction or confiscation. All money held by the population, without exception, will be gradually exchanged in the two weeks between 2d and 16th September. Both the hryvnya and the coupon [karbovanets] will circulate together for 15 days, and from then on, there will be only one Ukrainian currency, the hryvnya.

I want to stress one point and ask all those resident in Ukraine not to rush to exchange their money today. There is no need to play into the pockets of commercial banks and commercial structures with your rash actions. They seek to make additional profits from every decision made by the government. As you know, at exchange bureaus yesterday the rate of the coupon already exceeded 200,000 to the dollar. I do not understand this at all, and neither do other people. The National Bank's rate is 176,000 to one dollar, and exchange bureaus are selling it today for 220,000. The National Bank and the government declare that the rate will not change. It has already stabilized. The latest rate is one dollar to 190,000 [karbovantsi]. That is more or less normal. That is at exchange bureaus. And I assure you, on 2 September, the rate will be at 1.75-1.76 hryvnyas to one dollar. And if you rush to exchange your money today, then you should know how much, about 50,000, you are giving away to those seeking profit from this or that measure. There is no need to do that.

Today, the government has every confidence; I guarantee that the reform will be 100 percent transparent and without any restrictions. Everyone, without exception, can make the exchange. If anyone is abroad or on vacation, the presidential decree allows the state commission and regional commissions to grant extensions to those who are unable to do so in time. This has been decided.

And the main thing: the presidential decree contains an instruction to the government to find a way to compensate funds held by people on 1 January 1992. Such a procedure is being developed and will be made public soon. All residents of Ukraine will know how this issue will be resolved. But I want to say now that it will be resolved in a positive way. Therefore, I am stating this again, dear countrymen, the government has done its best to ensure that the introduction of the hryvnya and the implementation of the monetary reform does take place for all, especially the least protected sections of the population. We will take all your wishes, all your proposals into account, and all without exception will be able to make the exchange within the period specified in the president's decree without any restriction. Thank you.

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Ukraine: Government Commission Sums Up Crimea Inspection Results

WS2608112096 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 20 Aug 96 p 3

[Report by Oleksandr Kulyk: "Attention Focused on Crimean Problems"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A governmental commission worked in Crimea for a week. The commission examined the implementation of the president's edicts, as well as of regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers regarding the resolution of socioeconomic, political, legal, and humanitarian problems in the region.

A meeting led by Ukraine First Deputy Prime Minister Vasyl Durdynets was held in Simferopol on 17 August. The session — the aim of which was to summarize the activities of the governmental commission — was attended by the Crimean Government leadership, ministers, and Crimea's city and rayon state administration heads. A harsh and principled discussion was based on a profound and all-around analysis of the political and socioeconomic situation in Crimea. It was pointed out that regardless of the tangible stabilization of the political life in the peninsula, the socioeconomic situation continues to worsen. The production decline continues and its pace considerably exceeds the national indicator. For instance, in the first seven months of 1996, industrial product manufacturing decreased by 16.3 percent as compared to the corresponding period of 1995.

The commission positively assessed the effectiveness of the activities of the Crimean health resort complex. In the first seven months of 1996, the incomes of health resorts increased by 17 percent as compared to the corresponding period of 1995, amounting to 23.6 trillion karbovantsi [K].

The Autonomous Republic's policy on forming and using the budget was harshly criticized, given that due to this policy only 34.8 percent of the sum envisioned for 1996 was available to the budget in the first seven months of 1996. Unsatisfactory work on increasing production volumes and collecting taxes produced problems in implementing the budget. Massive violations of the tax laws take place in Crimea. An additional K433 billion was sent to the budget by tax services as a result of inspections. Members of the governmental commission cited numerous facts when, under conditions of financial constraints, tangible budget funds were not used accordoing to envisioned purposes or were spent on things of secondary importance.

Most frequently violations of the law are committed by institutions of the Education, Social Protection, and Culture Ministries of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The inspection disclosed evidence of plundering the state's funds. All this is being done against the background of considerable wage arrears and debts for other unpaid social benefits received by the population.

The issue of financial assistance for the region has been persistently raised by the government of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea before Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers. However, the Crimean Government itself does not meet its obligations before the state budget.

There are serious problems with regard to the settlement of the Crimean Tatars and representatives of other deported nationalities on the peninsula. Due to the reduction of funds, the settlement program has been practically curbed. Members of the commission, as well as Vasyl Durdynets, emphasized the need to unite the efforts of the center and the region to resolve this important issue which will determine the future of many people.

The attention of the participants in the session was focused on humanitarian problems, particularly on creating necessary conditions for teaching children their native languages at schools. In the entire Crimea, where approximately 700,000 Ukrainians live, there is only one Ukrainian school in Simferopol, the status of which has not been determined yet. Therefore, the school faces great problems in its activities. As few as 340 children learn the Ukrainian language in Crimea.

Significant attention was paid to the issue of fighting organized crime and strengthening law and order.

It was pointed out at the session that the improvement in the political life in the peninsula opens additional opportunities for the resolution of economic and social problems. However, so far, the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea has not used these positive circumstances for the improvement of the social conditions of the peninsula's inhabitants.

Ukraine: Anticrime Commission Head on Terrorist Attacks, Tasks

WS2708142596 Sevastopol FLOT UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 10 Aug 96 p 5

[Interview with Hryhoriy Omelchenko, head of the Ukrainian Supreme Council Commission for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption, by Vitaliy Zayichenko; place and date not given: "Under the Present Circumstances, Possibility of Terror Is Very High" — first paragraph is FLOT UKRAYINY introduction; passages in italics published in Russian]

[FBIS Translated Text] Undoubtedly, an explosion on the road along which Ukraine's Prime Minister Pavlo

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Lazarenko's car was moving became an extraordinary event in Ukraine's life. What was it — a terrorist attack, something else? Does this explosion mark the beginning of terrorism in Ukraine? Hryhoriy Omelchenko, head of the parliamentary Commission for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption, comments on this issue.

[Zayichenko] Hryhoriy Omelchenko, how can we assess this extraordinary event and what consequences will it have for the social and political situation in the state?

[Omelchenko] The explosion or the terrorist attack — as officials have named it — which occurred on the road Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko's car was moving on the morning of 16 July should be viewed in the context of the general social, political, and crime-breeding situation in Ukraine.

Under the conditions of political instability, profound socioeconomic and spiritual crisis, the population's mass impoverishment, bureaucratic arbitrariness, and nation-wide racketeering, the possibility of both criminal and political terror is very high. Forceful terrorist methods can be applied to reach political or other parochial goals. This is proved by the events occurring in Ukraine, as well as in other countries in the world.

Analysis indicates that terrorist acts in Ukraine as a rule were carried out by criminal clans in the process of fighting one another (the so-called squaring of accounts) for the division of spheres of influence, with an eye toward eliminating rivals in illegal entrepreneurial, commercial, and banking activities. They included contract killings or intimidation of representatives of state administration bodies or of the government.

For the time being, I will refrain from commenting further on the aforementioned explosion as well as on my vision of the scenario of the further development of political events in Ukraine.

However, I would like to point out that this explosion, as well as other developments, including those of a political and personnel character, which have taken place within the past three or four weeks, disclosed better than anything else the essence and skills of the state leadership and their closest retinue.

The explanation whether it was a terrorist act or not, the aims of its organizers and performers, as well as their motives will give us an answer to the most important question: is our current executive power led by President Leonid Kuchma able to protect our Constitution, constitutional order, life, health, rights, freedoms, and lawful interests of not only senior officials, but all Ukraine's citizens, and to tame the so-called "fifth power" which is mentioned so often by the president? Or, perhaps, the "fifth power" has already become the first one?

Do you recall one of the election leaflets of the 1994 presidential election entitled *"Leonid Kuchma: Order and Decency"*? I would like to draw your attention to the last paragraph: *"In July I will have enough strength and power to bring about order in the state. L. Kuchma."* As we can see, July 1994 passed, the same as July 1995; July 1996 is ending with explosions all over Ukraine, as well as in the city of Kiev, and there is still no order in the state. Therefore, I have a question for the president. Esteemed Leonid Danylovych [Kuchma], would you be so kind to tell us which July you had in mind when you promised to bring about order in the country? Is this not the last July for establishing order?

[Zayichenko] I entirely support your question to the president. However, I have a few more questions for you. To what degree is terrorism characteristic of Ukraine? What scale has it obtained in the world and what is the basis of it?

[Omelchenko] According to UN materials and foreign media reports, within the past 25 years we have observed an increasing tendency for terrorist activities. While in 1980 approximately 500 terrorist acts were committed, in 1985 there were around 800 of them, and within the period 1990-1995 thousands of terrorist acts were committed annually by criminals.

For instance, in the United States, according to opinion polls held by authoritative media, over 82 percent of those questioned stated that terrorism is the most dangerous phenomenon for their country. And this is true. According to experts, the biggest threat of terrorism lies in its nature. Terrorism reflects and propagates the cult of violence; facilitates its development; and acknowledges its prevalence over legal, political, and diplomatic methods of resolving conflicts. Thus, conflicts or problems always lie at the basis of terrorism, and terror is a method of resolving these problems.

Let us proceed to Ukraine now. While in 1991 slightly over 70 acts of a terrorist nature against representatives of administration bodies were disclosed, in 1992 there were 150 of these kinds of acts, in 1993 almost 180, in 1994 (the year of elections to administrative bodies) over 250, and in 1995 there were over 180 of these acts.

It is worth pointing out that in 1994 during the election campaign, 63 candidates for Ukraine's Supreme Council were threatened, including with terrorist acts.

A dangerous factor which has an impact on the conditions of fighting terrorism is illegal possession of over 5,500 firearms by the population .

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Characteristic also is the fact that we are observing the threatening tendency to commit crimes which bear terrorist traits with the use of self-made explosive devices. Over the two past years alone, over 560 of these kinds of crimes have been committed, resulting in the deaths of 90 people, of whom 15 were representatives of the administration; 218 people have been wounded, including 19 representatives of administrative bodies.

[Zayichenko] What conclusions can we draw from these data and what measures should be undertaken to fight decisively terrorist acts?

[Omelchenko] Based on the available data, the analysis of the situation, and on expert assessments, we can assert that the number of terrorist acts in the world, particularly in Ukraine, will not decrease in the immediate future, but on the contrary will increase. In addition, terrorist acts will be severe. As a matter of fact, I spoke about this at an international conference "European Cooperation in Fighting International Crime and Terrorism" held in Kiev at the end of March.

Ukraine, the same as many former Soviet Union republics, belongs to a group of countries with an unstable political situation and is going through a bitter socioeconomic and spiritual crisis. Under these circumstances — as the world's experience proves — we cannot rule out that political goals will not be achieved by legal methods or by compromises. They may be achieved by terrorist and forceful methods, through a revolution. Under these circumstances, the possibility of both political and criminal terror is very high. This is proved by the development of events in Russia, the Balkans, the Near East, and the like. All this should be taken into account by our state's leadership, representatives of all branches of power, and political leaders.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Deputy Premier Comments on Monetary Reform

LD2608134796 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 0400 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As we have already reported, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma has signed a decree on launching monetary reform in our state. Viktor Pinzenik, Ukrainian deputy prime minister for economic reform, has granted an exclusive interview to National Radio Company of Ukraine in which he tells how the monetary reform will be carried out. The deputy premier was interviewed by journalist Volodymyr Slipko.

[Slipko] Viktor Mykhaylovych, Ukraine is lucky to mark its jubilee [fifth anniversary of independence, 24 August] by materializing, speaking figuratively, something it has been moving toward for a long time, I have in mind monetary reform.

[Pinzenik] We are entering the sixth year of independence with a fully fledged monetary unit — the hryvnya. Its introduction has been prepared through a long period of stabilization measures to implement the president's program for economic reforms, which sometimes envisaged difficult, even ambiguous decisions — decisions that were perceived by the population ambiguously. However, without those decisions, it would be impossible to enter the stage of introducing a stable national monetary unit, a reliably protected monetary unit, which is a no less important condition for stabilization. This stage begins on 2 September 1996.

[Slipko] Please say, will the hryvnya have a solid basis?

[Pinzenik] You have already had a chance to become convinced that the Ukrainian karbovanets, having assumed the tremendous burden of inflationary depreciation in 1993, having gone through rather serious cataclysm, has become a stable national monetary unit. I am saying this confidently and I am confident about its future, because throughout the current year we have been observing the following: first, the exchange rate of the national monetary unit has been growing. In July, one dollar traded at 178,000 karbovantsi on average, whereas in December 1995 the average price of the dollar was 179,500 karbovantsi. This process has been taking place for quite a while. Second, the level of inflation today is relatively low. In the past two months, inflation amounted to as little as 0.1 percent. This is not just a one-month phenomenon, this process is what has been taking place lately. Despite the existing problems, very serious problems, the solution of which requires time [words indistinct].

[Slipko] And now, a most down-to-earth question: how will the population be supplied with hryvnyas?

[Pinzenik] The new monetary unit will be put into circulation as of 2 September, to replace the karbovanets. From 2 September, all enterprises, establishments, and organizations will have their accounts converted into hryvnyas at an exchange rate of 1 hryvnya to 100,000 Ukrainian karbovantsi. This exchange rate will apply to both cash and non-cash transactions. Two monetary units — the coupon [another word for karbovanets] and the hryvnya will be in non-cash circulation for 15 days — until 16 September inclusive. During this time, goods will be sold for both karbovantsi and hryvnyas. Incidentally, prices, wages, pensions, and grants will be rounded to the nearest kopiyka [100th of a hryvnya]. Sums less than half kopiyka will be discounted and sums exceeding half kopiyka will be rounded upward to the kopiyka. It is important that any price rises will

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be banned during one month, an important month, and that control will be exercised over the ban.

What can citizens do during this time, how can they use their coupons? First, wages, pensions, and grants will not be paid in karbovantsi as of 2 September. All payments will be made only in hryvnyas. On the contrary, the Ukrainian karbovanets will be widely accepted as legal tender. One can use karbovantsi to buy goods, services — including housing and local public utilities — to open a bank account, for transfers, or for [currency] exchange. Karbovantsi can be exchanged at one's place of work or through a network of over 20,000 exchange points set up within the framework of the banking system. Besides, a large network of exchange points will be set up at enterprises. However, in most cases people will simply have no need for exchange points — the two-week-long parallel circulation of the karbovanets and the hryvnya will allow everyone to use their karbovantsi for current payments without any haste. If they need to exchange karbovantsi, this could be done without any restrictions either at a bank or at one's place of work.

[Slipko] And what is to be done with foreign currencies? How will they correlate with the hryvnya? Are there any grounds for the people to panic?

[Pinzenik] I can give an approximate idea of the exchange rate. As a result of the [new currency's] denomination — [equal to] the cancelation of five zeroes — the estimated exchange rate will be 1.75-1.76 hryvnya to one dollar, 1.18-1.20 hryvnya to one German mark, and 1 hryvnya to 3,000 Russian rubles. We even hope that the hryvnya-dollar exchange rate will change in favor of the hryvnya right after the monetary reform is over. This is a reference point to be used by people as a guide. They should not yield to attempts by someone else to make a fortune at their expense.

We have not done anything to evoke people's concern — neither the very nature of the monetary reform, nor our actions give any reason to cause any fluctuations of the exchange rate today. In this situation it is profitable to sell dollars, and I would not recommend buying them. This is my advice. Think for yourself what is better — to pay, as some people are trying to do now, 220 karbovantsi [presumably 220,000 karbovantsi; the dollar is currently traded at 176,100 karbovantsi], an equivalent of 2 hryvnyas and 20 kopiykas, for the dollar, or to pay 1.75-1.76 or even less for the dollar after the monetary reform is over?

Therefore, if someone wishes to get rid [of karbovantsi], I would not recommend them to do so. Of course, this is your choice and your right, but we advise you not to do so, because you will incur losses in addition to the commission charged by exchange points. Besides, many exchange points are now operating in a restricted regime, and if you try to exchange karbovantsi in the street, you have a chance of getting either forged karbovantsi or forged dollars — 95 percent of forged Ukrainian banknotes do not have a special mark. Please pay attention to the following: [authentic] banknotes with the denomination of 200,000 karbovantsi, 500,000 karbovantsi, and 1 million karbovantsi have a watermark in the shape of a trident in the left-hand corner. If the mark is absent, the banknote is forged. Be careful, beware of forged karbovantsi, which will not be accepted when you want to exchange them. Therefore, try to operate as little as possible outside the legal currency-exchange network.

[Slipko] Viktor Mykhaylovych, can you give us an approximate idea of new prices for consumer goods and food products?

[Pinzenik] We can get our bearings as follows: if, for example, the price of a product is 20,000 karbovantsi, it will have two price tags until 16 September — 20,000 karbovantsi and 20 kopiykas.

By the way, I would like to say a few words about the face value of the hryvnya and kopiyka. Banknotes will have the following denominations: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 hryvnyas, and coins will have the face value of 1, 2, 5, 10, 25, and 50 kopiykas.

[Slipko] The hryvnya is an entirely new monetary unit. How will it behave within the international [currency] system?

[Pinzenik] The Ukrainian karbovanets is now behaving perfectly well within the international system. Since the end of 1994, the exchange rate of the karbovanets has been published in international financial editions. At present, this is a stable national monetary unit. Moreover, I would like to emphasize again that the exchange rate of the karbovanets against the dollar has been growing since April 1996. Our national currency has been growing stronger against the dollar. This, by the way, is one of the reasons why people have been selling their dollars, it is a natural and correct move. Anyone who tries to make calculations will make sure that 100 dollars, if exchanged for karbovantsi in January and then paid into a bank account under 30-40 percent interest, with the exchange rate of the dollar being stable all this time, will now be equivalent to $130-140. I repeat that this is the only way to do this.

This, by the way, is one of the reasons behind a phenomenon which did not cease to exist after the end of the [presidential] election in Russia — the inflow of dollars [into Ukraine], which was linked to the Russian

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election. This phenomenon is still alive — dollars are flowing into Ukraine and people are selling them, and they are doing an absolutely right thing. Because, with the stable exchange rate of the dollar and [low] inflation, it is much more profitable to save money in the national currency in relevant commercial bank accounts.

[Slipko] Has our eastern neighbor, Russia, been informed of the launching of the monetary reform? (?What are the prospects for the future)?

[Pinzenik] There are no problems here. Naturally, the president's decree envisages that all the countries with which we maintain serious economic relations, should be informed in advance of the introduction of the national currency unit; however, no problems emerge in interstate economic relations in connection with its introduction. I would like to repeat that all karbovantsi remaining in bank accounts will be automatically converted into hryvnyas on 2 September at the exchange rate of one hryvnya to 100,000 Ukrainian karbovantsi.

I would like to assure our citizens that they can be absolutely calm and at ease in the course of the monetary reform. The firm stand of the Ukrainian president and the prime minister that the reform will be honest, transparent, open and nonconfiscatory, has already been materialized. We have no intention of restricting the rights of any of our citizens. This is a very important condition for making people believe in our policy, in a good outcome of the reform which we expect. And we expect that our citizens will begin to invest their money, that they will trust the national monetary unit, that they will begin to save money and pay it into bank accounts, in other words, that they will provide investment and credit resources for the development of the national economy.

Ukraine: Government Officials Explain Introduction of New Currency

LD2508203796 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1800 GMT 25 Aug 96

[No video available]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma today signed an edict on monetary reform in Ukraine. A new monetary unit — the hryvnya — will be put into circulation as from 2 September, Viktor Yushchenko, the chairman of the National Bank of Ukraine, said in a special edition of Ukrainian TV news, in which he appeared together with Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Pynzenyk.

During their TV appearances and radio interviews, the government officials said the exchange of karbovantsi for hryvnyas would last from 2 till 16 September. During this time, both currencies will be in circulation as legal tender. Incidentally, Yushchenko said any citizen would have the right to exchange an unlimited sum in karbovantsi; however, sums exceeding 100 million karbovantsi would be paid into bank accounts.

In his turn, Deputy Prime Minister Pynzenyk said all the accounts of legal entities would be converted into hryvnya accounts as early as 2 September. He said that after the reform was over, the exchange rate of the hryvnya would be 1.75 hryvnyas per dollar. According to information released in special editions of our program earlier today, the hryvnya will be issued in banknotes with the face value of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 hryvnyas. Coins with their denomination expressed in terms of kopiyka will also be put into circulation.

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Belarus

Belarus: Lukashenka Discusses By-Elections, U.S. Asylum for Dissidents

WS2708091396 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 27 Aug 96

[Interview with Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka by Yawhen Myaleshka in Slutsk on 26 August; in Russian — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Myaleshka] [words indistinct] the Supreme Soviet Presidium is to discuss the issue of postponing the parliamentary by-elections scheduled by the Central Electoral Commission. What is your view of this action?

[Lukashenka] On 7 November, a referendum on issues which the president has explained will be held. Holding these by-elections contradicts the draft constitution proposed by the president. This is simply an undertaking aimed at derailing the referendum. After all, a 110-strong house of representatives and, as far as I remember, seven senators from every oblast are envisioned [in the new parliament]. Altogether there will be approximately 160-170 deputies. Since we currently have 200 deputies, such elections make no sense. Therefore, on 7 November a referendum on four questions will be held, and there will be no more elections. We have no money for this. I will ask local [electoral] commissions to carry out the referendum free of charge — and I think that people from the countryside and cities will support me — but I have no money for the elections.

[Myaleshka] We have learned that [Belarusian Popular Front leaders] Paznyak and Navumchyk have received asylum in the United States. Does it mean that the United States has [word indistinct] its cautious policy toward the Belarusian president? What is your reaction to this?

[Lukashenka] You know, Yawhen, I do not even want to react to this because this is below the level of presidential reaction. I have said briefly and clearly that if Clinton needs a couple of campaign workers in his election campaign, we can send him a few more people. Therefore, I have not reacted to this.

Belarus: President Lukashenka Makes New Security Appointments

WS2708103496 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Belarusian president has issued a number of edicts according to which Valyantsin Zakharavich Nikitsin has been dismissed from the office of Belarusian State Security Committee [KGB] Homel Oblast Directorate and transferred to the Republic's Security Council. Police Colonel Alyaksandr Alekseyevich Novikaw has been appointed first deputy chief of the Police Main Directorate of Public Security and the Belarusian Interior Ministry Special Police. Colonel Mikalay Vasilevich Bilin has been appointed deputy commander of the Belarusian Interior Ministry Troops.

Belarus: Speaker Sharetski Meets With Lithuanian Counterpart

WS2708103596 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0700 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Supreme Soviet Chairman Syamyon Sharetski has received Lithuanian Seimas Chairman Ceslovas Jursenas with his wife during the latter's working visit to Belarus. In the course of the talks, they discussed issues concerning relations between Belarus and Lithuania, the improvement of border services' work, and migration, including transit migration. The leaders of the two countries' highest legislative bodies also paid attention to issues concerning the Ignalina nuclear power plant.

During their stay in Belarus, the Lithuanian guests became familiar with exhibits available at the Yanka Kupala [famous Belarusian poet] museum in Vyazynka, where they laid flowers at a monument to the poet. They also visited the Dzyarzhynski kolkhoz and met with the managers of the Zabudova company in the settlement of [name indistinct].

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Urges End to Tajik-Afghan Border Fighting

LD2608185296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1607 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, Aug 26 (Interfax) — Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has urged Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Tajik opposition leader Said Abdullo Nuri to bring an end to fighting on the Tajik-Afghan border.

"Continuous armed actions on the Tajik-Afghan border are resulting in the death of servicemen, including Kazakh border guards," reads the August 23 statement by Nazarbayev circulated by his press service on Monday [26 August].

"Kazakhstan has consistently spoken out in favor of achieving national reconciliation in Tajikistan and in favor of resolving all problems by talks," Nazarbayev said in the statement.

"The persistent use of armed force will only escalate the conflict to which the civilian population will fall victim," he said.

Nazarbayev urged the Afghan president and the Tajik opposition leader to "make every effort in order to end combat actions on the Tajik-Afghan border."

This "would certainly contribute to the creation of a favorable atmosphere regarding talks between the two conflicting sides," Nazarbayev said.

The fourth round of the inter-Tajik government-opposition talks was held in Almaty in spring 1995. During the talks, the Kazakh president submitted to the two delegations' chief negotiators specific recommendations aimed at ending civil war and reaching a stable peace in Tajikistan.

Nazarbayev and Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov met in Almaty on August 23 to consider the situation in Tajikistan.

Kazakhstan: Government Adopts Resolution To Enhance Nuclear Security

LD2608101996 Almaty PANORAMA in Russian 23 Aug 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Security measures at nuclear facilities and facilities presenting a danger of radiation are being strengthened in order to implement the order of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 2968 issued on 30 April 1996 "On Additional Measures To Ensure the Functioning of the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan." To ensure nuclear and radiation safety, the government has adopted a resolution "On Additional Measures To Ensure the Functioning of the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Nuclear and Radiation Safety at Its Facilities," instructing the Main Department of the State Firefighting Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to take over, beginning 1 January 1997, fire protection of facilities of the Atomic Energy Institute of the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the town of Kurchatov. The National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan is ordered to transfer fire protection at the Atomic Energy Institute of the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Main Department of the State Firefighting Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

With the aim of attracting foreign investment to ensure safety at nuclear facilities and facilities that present a danger of radiation belonging to the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan is to act as a head organization in conducting work to liquidate the nuclear weapons' infrastructure at the former Semipalatinsk test site in line with the agreement signed by Kazakhstan and the United States on 13 December 1993 to destroy underground installations for launching ballistic missiles, liquidate the consequences of emergency situations, and prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and in line with the agreement signed by the U.S. Department of Defense and the Ministry of Science and New Technologies of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 3 October 1995 to liquidate the nuclear weapons' infrastructure.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Rebels Express Doubt Over Government Job Offer

LD2308144696 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 22 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tajik Foreign Minister Talbak Nazarov said at the end of a meeting with Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Pastukhov yesterday evening [21 August] that the Tajik Government is ready to compromise with the [Islamic] opposition. It was reported by the Russian service of Radio Liberty this morning.

According to the opinion of the regime's Foreign Ministry official [Nazarov], opposition representatives can take posts in the government from the presidential staff downward. Moreover, the regime's foreign minister, Talbak Nazarov, said that the Russian side also agrees with the stance of the Tajik Government.

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The regime has repeatedly promised positions to the opposition in recent years. Voice of Free Tajikistan commentators are of the opinion that the Tajik government communist regime's purpose in this is to mislead the people of the republic. This statement is repeated every time officials of the Dushanbe government meet Russian agencies. The commentators say that the Tajik authorities' offers of posts are planned in the Kremlin. The leader of the United [Tajik] Opposition, Professor Sayed Abdullo Nuri, said at a news conference some time ago that such statements of the leaders of the regime are made on the advice of Moscow, and they [Tajik leaders] would rather die than fulfill their promises afterward.

Tajikistan: Rebels Report Killing 19 Government Troops in Attack

LD2708112496 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of a retaliatory attack by Tajik mojahedin more than 19 paramilitaries of the regime [Tajik Government] were killed in Komsomolabad District [central Tajikistan] on 25 August. Mullo Abdullo, the mojahedin commander in the area, said that the [opposition] fighters launched their attack near Labi Jar village in order to end the lawlessness by military units of the so-called National Army of Tajikistan. Many paramilitaries of the ruling regime were also injured in the clash and their weapons and ammunition were seized by the mojahedin.

Tajikistan: Two Policemen Killed, Three Wounded in Rogun

LD2308123696 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 23 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In the Obigarm area, unidentified armed forces crossed the Kalai-Khumb road and took six armed guards from a regime's law and order post prisoner. According to a source at the Interior Ministry of Dushanbe, two policemen were killed and three seriously wounded during the clash yesterday. The source added that Rogun District policemen did not help their colleagues, and fled from their posts toward Rogun, leaving no guard at the junction. The source said that the situation in this area is very tense and approaching a crisis.

Tajikistan: Four Police Officers Killed in Armed Attack on Checkpoint

LD2608095996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0754 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dushanbe, Aug 26 (Interfax) — Four Tajik policemen were killed in an attack on their checkpoint by a group of gunmen early on Saturday.

The checkpoint near the town of Rogun, 70 kilometers east of Dushanbe, came under automatic gunfire from nearby mountains. The policemen fired in retaliation and the exchange of fire lasted about 15 minutes. The attackers escaped.

An investigation has been launched and Tajik Interior Ministry troops are combing the area.

Law enforcement officers believe that the attack was carried out by a local pro-opposition group with up to 70 rebels.

The group has been attacking Tajik police and terrorizing the local population in Rogun since the end of 1992.

Over 100 policemen have died as a result of such attacks in Tajikistan since the beginning of this year.

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Armenia

Armenia: IAEA Experts Inspect Nuclear Power Plant

NC2408154796 Yerevan SNARK in English 0924 GMT 23 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, August 22 (SNARK)—Aleksander Kudriashev and Brad Wolfgang, experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency, attended the Armenian Atomic Plant to inspect the fulfillment of the Agreement on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons ratified by the Armenian Supreme Council on September 24, 1991. The Chief Engineer at the Atomic Plant, Gagik Markosyan, told SNARK that the IAEA experts saw [for] themselves that the Plant consumes nuclear fuel exclusively for energy generation.

Replying to a question if waste can be used as nuclear weapons, Vladimir Kurghinyan, Chief Inspector of the State Atomic Control said it is possible after additional processing stressing however, that waste is radioactive substance.

Armenia: Russia To Provide R88.3 Billion Credit for Nuclear Plant

NC2608145096 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Gagik Shahbazyan, minister of relations with the CIS, EU, and International Economic Organizations, and Aleksey Bolshakov, first deputy prime minister of Russia, have signed in Moscow a credit agreement between the two countries whereby Russia will provide Armenia with 88.3 billion Russian rubles [R] to ensure the safe operation of the Armenian nuclear power plant.

According to the government press service, issues relating to bilateral relations were discussed during the meeting [words indistinct], especially matters pertaining to industry and energy were at the focus of attention.

Within the context of his working visit to Moscow, Gagik Shahbazyan also met with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Valeriy Serov. Cooperation between Armenia and Russia within the framework of the CIS and a number of regional issues were examined.

Armenia: Nagorno-Karabakh Objects to OSCE Representative's Actions

NC2408155096 Yerevan SNARK in English 0925 GMT 23 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Stepanakert, August 23 (SNARK)—Today, NKR's [Nagorno-Karabakh Republic] Department on Information and Press released a statement saying that recently Baku launched propaganda in media aimed at justifying their destructive position in the peace negotiations. It is surprising that Frank Lambakh, German representative in the OSCE Minsk group got involved in the propaganda.

Lambakh's statements and actions during his visit to Baku seem to be partial and biased. Meanwhile he is trying to play a special role as a mediator.

Neglecting agreements reached in the OSCE Minsk group, Lambakh carelessly spoke on the most delicate issues of the conflict. NKR's leadership refrains from commenting on the diplomat's statements but voices concern over his excited interpretations of the positions of the world community and Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh.

NKR leaders regret also the fact that Lambakh took part in a show arranged by the Azeri Foreign Ministry along the front line. If he had been interested in the situation along the front line he could like his colleagues from the Minsk group have got the consent of NKR authorities and attended the front line.

Similar incident might create additional difficulties in the negotiation process, the statement says.

Georgia

Georgia: Expert Foresees Complications in Ties With Russia

LD2408124496 Tbilisi SAKINFORM in Russian 1035 GMT 24 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Georgia's stalwart integration in European structures is likely to complicate its relations with Russia, Gela Charkviani, chief foreign affairs adviser to the Georgian president, said while commenting on Georgia's foreign policy achievements. Indeed, taking into consideration Georgia's geopolitical situation in the first instance, not only the European Union countries but also Russia is interested in gaining influence in Georgia. The expert believes that a complex approach to the development of international relations could be the right way. The implementation of the Caucasus corridor project, in which European states as well as Russia are involved, may become a model for the approach.

Georgia: Russian Diplomat Rules Out Pressure on Abkhazia

LD2608141096 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1315 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 26 Aug — Boris Pastukhov, the first deputy Russian foreign minister, after talks in Gali with [the Abkhaz separatist leader]

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Vladislav Ardzinba, told the local television that despite large costs incurred due to the upkeep of Russian peacekeeping forces in the [Georgian-Abkhaz] conflict zone, he is still of the opinion that the peacekeepers should remain in the conflict zone. Pastukhov noted that "Russia does not intend to pressure the Abkhaz people to make their free choice." According to Pastukhov, there are certain disagreements at the talks between the conflicting sides and work is under way to iron out the differences.

The Abkhaz foreign minister, Konstantin Ozgan, said in the above interview that "the Abkhaz side abides by the Geneva agreement of 4 April 1994, according to which Abkhazia is a separate state."

In Ozgan's words, the Abkhaz side, just like the Georgian side, supports the process of negotiations but "it is time everybody understood that Abkhazia will never be a constituent part of Georgia. The Abkhaz people will not allow this. We are not talking about Abkhazia seceding from Georgia but about the fact that Abkhazia is not and never will be part of Georgia. In one or two years time Abkhazia will be recognized as an independent state."

Georgia: National Security Council Discusses Abkhazia, Ukraine

LD2608144896 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Georgian 1350 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi [no date as received] — A session of the National Security Council was held on 25 August. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. The session heard reports by Foreign Minister Irakli Menagharashvili, and Vazha Lordkipanidze, Georgian ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Russian Federation, on talks on the Abkhaz conflict settlement, currently under way in Moscow.

The session discussed the prospects and priorities of cooperation between Georgia and Ukraine.

The session was held behind closed doors.

Georgia: Official Comments on Refugee Issue in Abkhazia

LD2408101996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0920 GMT 24 Aug 96

[By Tengiz Pachkoria]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, August 24 (Itar-Tass) — Having familiarised with the situation in the Gali District of Abkhazia, one could draw the conclusion that the situation there is very complicated, and there are no guarantees of a safe return and settlement of refugees, Adtandil Ioseliani, First Deputy Minister of State Security of Georgia, told Tass. He visited the Gali District of Abkhazia on Friday together with Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Pastukhov, Georgian Ambassador to Russia Vazha Lordkipanidze and other Georgian and Russian officials in order to examine the situation there. According to Ioseliani, at present there are no socio-economic conditions in the Gali District for the restoration and development of various sectors of the economy.

All this should be taken into consideration while planning the concrete steps, aimed at ensuring of the safe return and settlement of refugees, which are to be taken jointly by the Abkhazian and Russian sides.

Ioseliani said that Abkhazian officials had devoted the maximum of attention to the delegation of high-ranking Russian and Georgian representatives, and had helped them familiarise themselves with the situation in various villages of the Gali District and in the city of Gali.

Georgia: Abkhaz, Georgian Police To Protect Gali District Jointly

LD2408151896 Tbilisi BGI in Russian 1210 GMT 24 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Georgian and Abkhaz law-enforcement bodies must fight together against banditry and looting in Gali District. This was decided at today's regular quadripartite meeting at the Inguri bridge. The crime situation in Gali District was dicussed. The next meeting will discuss the detailed plan of operation, a BGI correspondent reported from Zugdidi.

Georgia: New Abkhaz Deputy Prime Minister Appointed

LD2708091396 Sukhumi Republic of Abkhazia Radio in Russian 0345 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] By decree of the president of the republic of Abkhazia and on the prime minister's recommendation, Valeriy Georgiyevich Kakalia has been appointed deputy prime minister of the republic of Abkhazia.

Georgia: Shevardnadze, S. Ossetian Leader Discuss Peace

LD2708115596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1118 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VLADIKAVKAZ, Aug 27 (Interfax) — The statement on the outcome of a meeting between Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze and Chairman of South Ossetia's Supreme Soviet Lyudvig

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Chibirov defines further steps on the road to full settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

The two sides exchanged opinions on a wide spectrum of issues related to political settlement of Georgian-Ossetian relations during the meeting, held in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. Having marked several positive advances in the resolution of problems resulting from armed confrontation in the conflict zone, the sides underlined that the memorandum on security measures and strengthening mutual confidence between the parties in the Georgian- Ossetian conflict is the most important step in the conflict settlement.

Shevardnadze and Chibirov confirmed their commitment to implementing the memorandum during the negotiations.

They pointed to the importance of a mutually acceptable solution to the legal aspect of the settlement. In particular, the statement says that the parties have reached an agreement to create "delegations with special authority which would start concrete work shortly acting in the spirit of the memorandum and principles of territorial integrity of states and rights of peoples for self- determination fixed in the memorandum."

Both Shevardnadze and Chibirov underlined that the parties have created a real foundation to put an end to this senseless conflict between peoples which had good neighborly, friendly relations for centuries.

A full-scale settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict will promote the establishment of peace and accord in the Caucasus as a whole, according to the leaders.

Commenting on this meeting, Russia's First Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Pastukhov said that South Ossetia must have rather wide-ranging rights, but if it acknowledges the common principle of territorial integrity it must be within the boundaries of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic as of December 1, 1991.

Georgia: League Issues Statement Over Armenian Military Units

LD2308095496 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 0900 GMT 23 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 23 Aug — According to an IPRINDA correspondent, the League of Georgian Patriots has issued a statement saying the following:

"It has become known to us that illegal military units are being created in some regions of southern Georgia that are densely populated by Armenians. Each unit consists of 60 to 120 people. The aim of these units is to defend the interests of chauvinist Armenian organizations in extreme situations, those organizations whose aim it is to create a great Armenian state.

"Special services of the Russian empire, who wish to create yet another hotbed for the destabilization of the Caucasus, are behind these actions.

"The League of Georgian Patriots calls on political forces in Armenia to recognize the following key principles for peaceful coexistence in the Caucasus — the territorial integrity of national states of the Caucasus and freeing the entire Caucasus region from occupational forces.

"If these principles are not recognized, then the League of Georgian Patriots will view the political forces in Armenia as strategic opponents and, on this basis, the league will be forced to take the relevant measures."

Georgia: Natural Gas Transportation Corporation Formed

LD2208172396 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Georgian 1400 GMT 22 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi — The Georgian Natural Gas Transportation International Corporation has been established by decree of the Georgian president. Aleksi Gotsiridze has been appointed chairman of the corporation with the status of the Georgian president's envoy plenipotentiary.

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Estonia

Estonia: Meri Opposes Abolition of 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty

LD2208175796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1525 GMT 22 Aug 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] Estonian President Lennart Meri spoke against the abolition of the 1920 Tartu peace treaty at the border talks with Russia.

"Estonia cannot in any case refuse its claim to recognize the treaty, because even the first deviation from the principles of the Tartu peace treaty will mean a forced refusal from something far more important," Meri told the deputies of the parliamentary faction of the Party of Development.

Russia considers the treaty, under which Estonia is to receive 2,500 square kilometers in the Pskov and Leningrad regions, as outdated and therefore invalid.

By now, Estonia dropped its territorial claims on Russia, keeping only the demand Russia recognize the treaty as valid.

Russia regards this demand as a territorial claim and agrees to recognize the historical value of the document only.

Estonia: No New Candidates for Second Round of Elections

LD2708091096 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 0800 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Riigikogu will again have the choice between two candidates: Lennart Meri and Arnold Ruutel. Contrary to statements from the leaders of the Fatherland Alliance and the Center Party faction, no documents for a third candidate, who would be a so-called compromise candidate, were submitted to the republic's electoral commission. [passage omitted]

The Riigikogu will meet for an unscheduled sitting at 1200 [0900 GMT] in order to continue the elections of the republic's president. In the second round, the head of the Estonian state is elected in secret polling, whereas a candidate needs the support of at least 68 members of the Riigikogu in order to be elected.

If none of the presidential candidates gains the necessary support in the second round either, a third round of voting will be conducted today between the two candidates who gained the largest number of votes. In the third round as well, in order to be elected, one of the candidates needs the support of two-thirds of the Riigikogu. [passage omitted]

Estonia: Parliament Fails To Elect President; To Vote Again

LD2708115096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1059 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Aug 27 (Interfax) — The Estonian parliament failed for a second time to elect a new president Tuesday.

Neither of the two candidates, incumbent President Lennart Meri and Deputy Parliamentary Chairman Arnold Ruutel, managed to win the required 68 out of 101 votes.

Meri won only 49 out of 96 votes, while Ruutel was supported by 34 deputies. Twelve deputies abstained from voting, while one ballot paper was invalid.

The first round of elections, held on Monday, had also proved fruitless.

According to presidential election law, the parliament will hold a third vote at 5 p.m. Moscow time Wednesday.

If the elections in parliament fail, the Estonian president will be elected by a commission of electors composed of deputies and local leaders.

Local observers believe that this option seems quite likely.

Latvia

Latvia: Senator Lugar, Parliament Speaker Discuss European Security

LD2708104096 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 0900 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaker of the Latvian Parliament Ilga Kreituse and Imants Daudiss, the Saeima [parliament] secretary and head of the Latvian delegation at the North Atlantic Assembly, met U.S. Senator Richard Lugar today. The senator arrived in Latvia for a visit that is to last several days. Kreituse stressed the significance of this meeting, because many issues currently topical for Latvia concern not only relations between Latvia and the United States but also relations between the two countries in the European context. The most important thing at the moment is how the European security system will evolve, what place the Baltic states will have in it, and how it may affect the current political situation.

For his part, Lugar demonstrated his understanding of how significant security problems are for Latvia, and said every sovereign country has the right to look after its security. The United States definitely will support

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Latvia's becoming a member of the European Union and NATO as soon as possible. On the other hand, Latvia's participation in the Partnership for Peace program is important at the moment. This could be one of the circumstances which will influence invitation of each particular country for talks with NATO.

Latvia: Foreign Minister Comments on Saeima Declaration

LD2708113396 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1000 GMT 27 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs believes that the Saeima [parliament] acted impetuously when it passed the declaration recognizing Latvia's occupation just before Latvian Prime Minister Andris Skele's planned visit to Russia. Speaking at a news conference today after a meeting with U.S. Senator Richard Lugar, Birkavs stressed that Latvia should not abandon its history and principles. However, good-neighbourly relations are needed with Russia.

Birkavs today expressed the hope that Skele's visit to Moscow and talks with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin will, nevertheless, take place and that the foreign minister will do everything possible to improve the situation.

Latvia: Official Criticizes Timing of USSR Occupation Declaration

LD2608181296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1804 GMT 26 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, Aug 26 (Interfax) — The declaration on Latvia's illegal occupation by the USSR in 1940, approved by the Latvian parliament last Thursday, was passed at the wrong time, Aivars Groza, a foreign policy adviser to the Latvian prime minister, told Interfax Monday.

Sources in Moscow said earlier that the visit of Latvian Prime Minister Andris Skele, scheduled for the first half of September, is highly unlikely to take place because of the declaration.

Groza said he expressed his personal opinion on the issue. Whether Skele's visit will take place "entirely and in full depends on the inviting, i.e. Russian, side," he said.

According to him, during the visit, scheduled for September 13, the sides would sign agreements on air transportation and on the abolition of double taxation. The sides are also working on a draft treaty on mutual protection of investments, he said.

Latvia: Saeima Fails To Ratify Baltic Sea Oil Exploration Deal

LD2308132896 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 0800 GMT 23 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On Thursday [22 August], the Latvian Saeima did not ratify the agreement with foreign companies on oil exploration in the area of the Baltic Sea shelf, disputed by Lithuania and Latvia. The ratification was postponed because the Saeima did not have enough time to deal with the matter. Ratification of the agreement is now scheduled for the next parliament sitting, which is to take place in one week's time.

Recently, diplomatic tension between Vilnius and Riga has been high, as the Latvian Saeima was intending to ratify an agreement on 22 August with Amoco of the United States and OPAB of Sweden on oil exploration in the Baltic Sea. Lithuania opposes this deal, since the oil deposit to be explored lies on an area of the Baltic Sea which has not yet been ascribed either to Latvia or to Lithuania.

On Tuesday, the Lithuanian Seimas appealed to the Latvian members of parliament, urging them to postpone ratification of the agreement. Such ratification, according to the Lithuanian parliament, would worsen the violation of international law and would render the talks on the maritime border and economic zone between Latvia and Lithuania more difficult.

On Thursday, the Latvian Saeima did not discuss the appeal of the Lithuanian Seimas. According to the Latvian officials, ratification of the agreement will not produce any negative effect on Lithuania, since the document will not come into force before the Lithuanian and Latvian maritime border is agreed upon.

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